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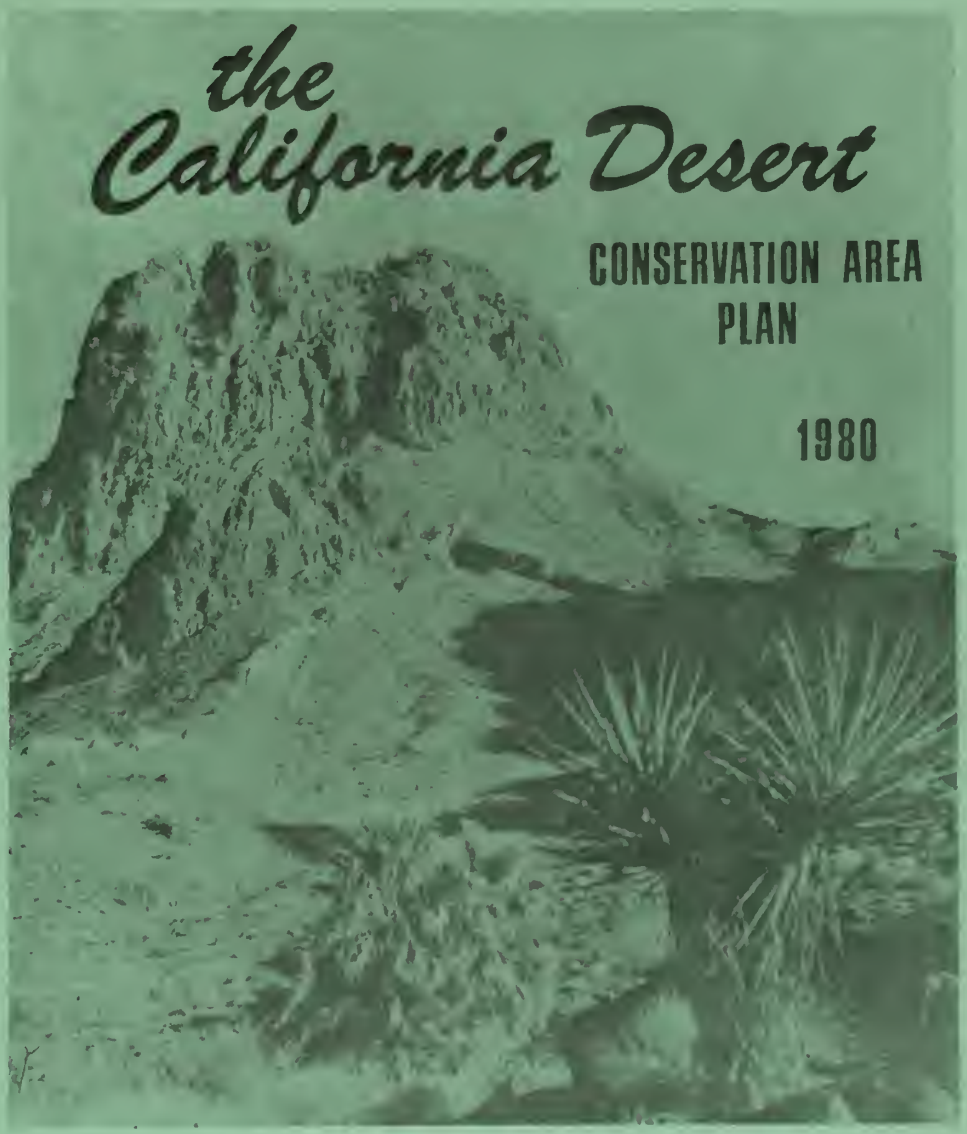
PROPOSED

1983 PLAN AMENDMENTS TO

the California Desert

Draft Environmental Impact Statement



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United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
California

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
California Desert District
1695 Spruce Street
Riverside, California 92507

IN REPLY
REFER TO
1600
(C-064)

Dear Reader:

Last March (1983), we invited you and other interested parties to review the California Desert Plan as amended and submit any comments and recommendations for proposed amendments of the Plan. The response that we received from organizations and individuals as well as from our own staff resulted in the amendment proposals contained in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

My thanks to those of you who sent in comments and suggestions - I hope that you will continue to help us manage your public lands.

The decision to accept or to reject these proposed amendments will be based on a number of factors including effect on the natural environment, input from the public, and recommendations of the California Desert District Advisory Council.

We are providing a 90-day period for public review of the Draft EIS. Please be sure to return your comments to this office no later than .
Send your comments to the following address:

California Desert District
Bureau of Land Management
ATTN: Plan Amendments
1695 Spruce Street
Riverside, California 92507

Sincerely,

Gerald E. Hillier
District Manager

ID: 88057410

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Draft Environmental Impact Statement

PROPOSED 1983 AMENDMENTS TO THE CALIFORNIA DESERT CONSERVATION AREA PLAN

Prepared by
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
California Desert District

The Bureau of Land Management is conducting its 1983 review of the California Desert Plan. This Environmental Impact Statement considers the environmental consequences of accepting or rejecting each of the 14 proposed amendments which have been accepted for consideration. Amendments fall into several categories, including desert-wide amendments, site-specific vehicle access changes, livestock grazing adjustments, ACEC and special area designation changes, and multiple-use class changes. Under the Bureau's preferred alternative, ten amendments would be accepted and four would be rejected. Desert-wide Class C acreage would change from 1,839,640 to 1,655,940 Class L would change from 6,070,050 to 6,253,750, and Classes M and I would remain unchanged.

Ed Hastey
STATE DIRECTOR
CALIFORNIA STATE OFFICE

For Further Information Contact: Gerald E. Hillier, District Manager
California Desert District
Bureau of Land Management
1695 Spruce Street
Riverside, California 92507

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SUMMARY

PLAN AMENDMENTS

In accordance with the procedures set forth in Chapter 7 of the California Desert Plan and with 43 CFR 1600 (BLM Planning Regulations), the Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District has initiated the third amendment review of the plan.

Proposals for amendments were accepted during a 45-day period from mid-March until April 30, 1983. Approximately 40 proposals were made by the public and by BLM staff for consideration. These amendments were screened by BLM management and the California Desert District Advisory Council to determine which proposals should be considered at this time and which should be deferred, dropped, or could be handled more appropriately by an administrative action. Fourteen amendments were recommended for consideration:

Category	Number	Description
Vehicle Access	1	Add East and West Cronese lake to significant list and designate them "closed".
	2	Add Ibex Dunes to significant list and designate them "closed".
	3	Close 18,000 acres of the Devils Playground south of Soda Dry Lake.
Lands	4	Clarify multiple use class guidelines to guide land sales.
Multiple Use Class Changes	5	Change Planning Units 44e/48e from Class "M" to Class "L".
ACECs/Special Areas	6	Change Creosote Rings ACEC from "unclassified" to Class "L".
	7	Designate new ACEC to protect Sclerocactus polyancistrus habitat near Helendale.
	8	Designate new ACEC south of Desert Center (Alligator Rock) to protect archaeological sites.

Category	Number	Description
Grazing	9	Change classification of Pilot Knob grazing allotment from ephemeral to ephemeral/perennial.
	10	Expand Cronese grazing allotment.
	11	Expand Ord Mountain Grazing allotment.
Wild Horses and Burros	12	Delete the Panamint Herd Management Area (concentration areas 8, 10, and 12).
Wilderness	13	Change Santa Rosa Mountains (former WSA 341) from Class C to Class L.
	14	Change Orocopia Mountains (former WSA 344) from Class C to Class L.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Impacts have been assessed for both accepting and rejecting each amendment, as well as amendments resulting from acceptance of alternatives to several of the amendments. Table S-1 summarizes those impacts.

TABLE S-2

CANDIDATE AMENDMENTS ---- SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

X = POSITIVE IMPACT — = NEGATIVE IMPACT

Amendment No.	Amendment	RESOURCES								USES			
		Soil - Air - Water	Botany	Wildlife	Horses/ Burros	Cultural Resources	Native Americans	Wilderness	Visual Resources	Livestock Grazing	Recreation	Lands	Geology/ Energy/ Minerals
1.	CRONESE LAKES			X									
2.	IBEX DUNES												
3.	DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND			X		X					—		
4.	LAND SALES GUIDELINES											X	
5.	PLANNING UNITS 44e/48e			X									—
6.	CREOSOTE RINGS ACEC		X										
7.	SCLERACACTUS ACEC												
	Alternative A		X	X									
	Alternative B												
8.	ALLIGATOR ROCK ACEC					X							
9.	PILOT KNOB ALLOTMENT												
	Alternative A			—						X			
	Alternative B			—						X			
10.	CRONESE LAKE ALLOTMENT												
	Alternative A			—		—							
	Alternative B									X			
	Alternative C			—		—							
11.	ORD MTN ALLOTMENT												
	Alternative A			—		—				X			
	Alternative B			—						X			
12.	PANAMINT HMA												
13.	SANTA ROSA MTNS												
	Alternative A												
	Alternative B			—		—		—			X		
14.	OROCOPIA MTNS			—				—			X		

SELECTION OF PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Based in part upon the amendment-specific impacts, a preferred alternative was selected, either to accept, reject, or accept an alternative version of each amendment. This choice does not represent a final decision, but simply indicates a preliminary recommendation to be presented in the draft EIS for public review and comment. The cumulative impacts of this preferred alternative are presented in Table S-2 below:

TABLE S-2
SUMMARY OF CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Resource	Unit of Measure	No Action	Preferred Alternative	Percent Change	New Percent Of Desert
Multiple Use Class (CDCA)					
C	Acres	1,839,640	1,655,940	-10	13.7 (17.3)*
L	Acres	6,070,050	6,253,750	+3	51.6 (48.5)*
M	Acres	3,370,560	3,370,560	0	27.8 (27.5)*
I	Acres	522,610	522,610	0	4.3 (4.1)*
Unclassified	Acres	314,000	314,000	0	2.6 (2.6)*
ACECs Added					
	Number	0	3		
	Acres	0	75,000		
Livestock Grazing					
Ephemeral Allotments	Number	16	16		
	Acres	1,619,879	1,619,879		
Ephemeral/Perennial	Number	65	65		
Allotments	Acres	2,462,131	2,462,131		
Perennial Allotments	Number	13	13		
	Acres	749,668	749,668		
Motorized Vehicle Access					
Open	Acres	523,000	523,000		
Limited	Acres	9,304,000	9,286,000		
Closed	Acres	1,978,000	1,996,000		
Point-to-Point Race Course/Corridors	Number	4	4		

* Percent of Area in Original Plan

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the procedures set forth in Chapter 7 of the California Desert Conservation Area Plan (1980) and with 43 CFR 1600 (BLM planning regulations), the Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District, has initiated the third amendment review of the plan.

Proposals for amendments were accepted during a 45-day period from mid-March to April 30, 1983. Approximately 40 amendments were proposed by the public and by the BLM staff for consideration during the review. The proposed amendments were then screened by BLM management and by the California Desert District Advisory Council to determine which ones met the following criteria:

1. Is the proposed amendment based on new data not considered when the plan was developed?

2. Does the information represent a change in legal or regulatory mandate?

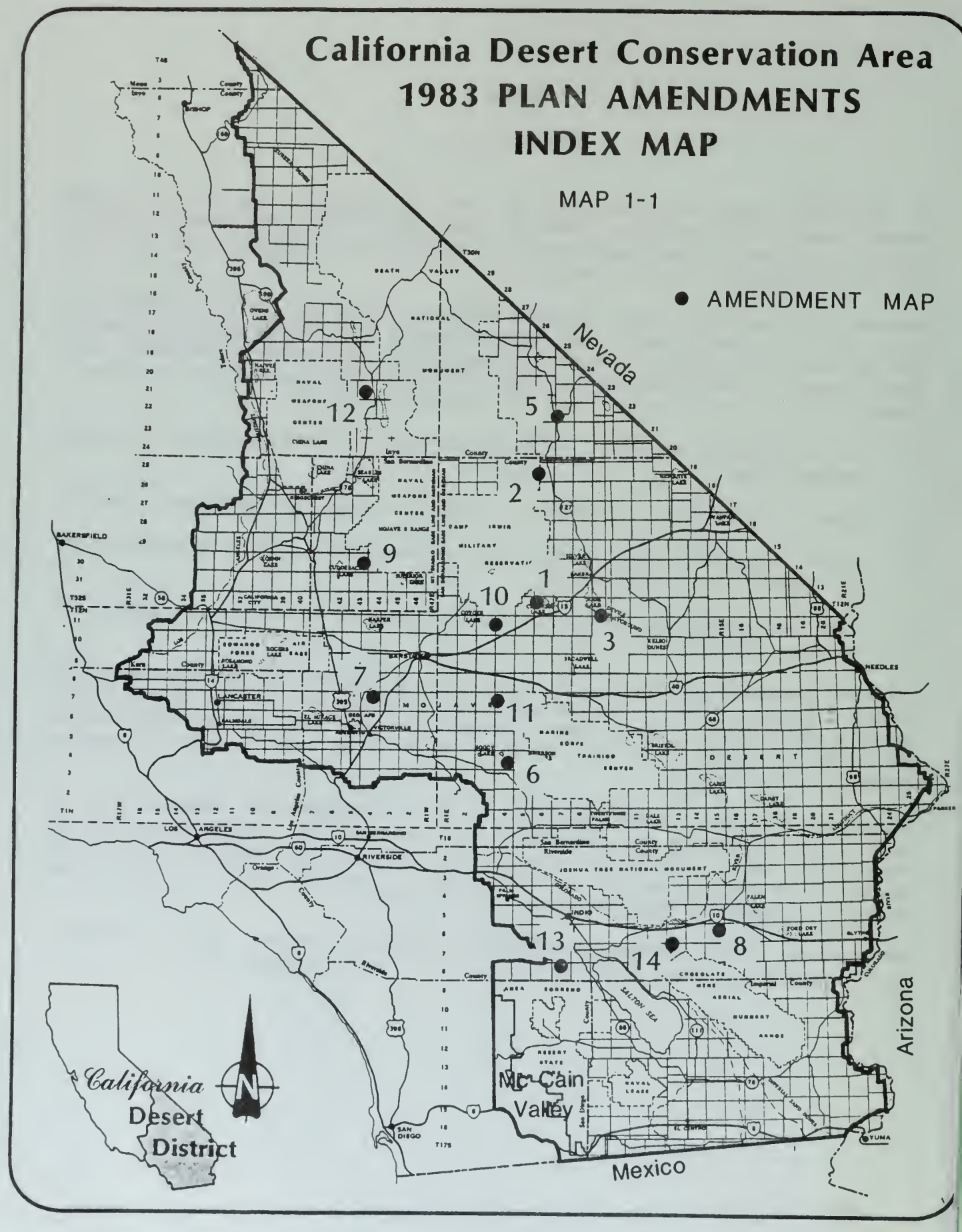
3. Is the supporting detail sufficient and the problem clearly stated so that the request can be considered?

4. Does the information represent a formal change in State or local government or agency plans?

Fourteen proposals met the criteria and will be analyzed by this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). One proposal will be handled by the vehicle route designation process. Twenty-two proposals were rejected for consideration at this time or defered for consideration at a later date because of reasons detailed in Appendix B.

The final decision concerning whether or not to approve each amendment will be made 45 days following the publication of the Final EIS. The decision will be based upon several factors, including the findings of this EIS and public response received during the review periods of the Draft and Final EIS. That decision is presently expected in early March 1984.

The majority of the amendments address site-specific issues. Map 1-1 indicates their regional location; specific maps can be found in Appendix A.


California Desert Conservation Area
1983 PLAN AMENDMENTS
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MAP 1-1
AMENDMENT MAP
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California
Desert
District
N
Mc Cain
Valley

CHAPTER 2
AMENDMENTS AND ALTERNATIVES

CHAPTER II

AMENDMENTS AND ALTERNATIVES

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Fourteen proposed amendments to the California Desert Plan have been accepted for consideration. Each amendment has been considered individually for either acceptance or rejection. The rejection of an amendment represents the "no action" alternative. Additional alternatives have been proposed for several of the amendments which present modified versions of the proposal.

The amendments have been grouped into the following categories:

1. Vehicle Access
2. Lands
3. Multiple Use Class Changes
4. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
5. Grazing
6. Wild Horses and Burros
7. Wilderness

Table 2-1 describes each of the proposed amendments and the reasons given by the proponent for the change. Maps of each amendment are located in Appendix A; the proponents of the amendments are listed in Appendix B (Table B-2).

TABLE 2-1
Description of Amendments

Amendment Number	Amendment	Proponent's Reason for Submission	Preferred Alternative	Rationale for Selection of Preferred Alternative
	VEHICLE ACCESS			
1	AMENDMENT: Add the East and West Cronese Dry Lakes to the "significant list" in the Motorized Vehicle Element and designate them "closed" to motorized vehicle use.	The Cronese lakes are sensitive because of wildlife habitat. (East Cronese lake is an ACEC; both are Class "L")	Accept	Present recreation use of lakebeds is low. There are high densities of archaeological sites on the shorelines. The lakebeds are used as migratory stopover for waterfowl. Closure would prevent disturbance, as well as protecting waterfowl food sources. East Cronese has been filled with water each of the past five years.
2	Add the Ibex Dunes to the "significant list" in the Motorized Vehicle Element and designate it "closed" to Motorized Vehicle use.	The dunes (Class M) are located partly in Death Valley National Monument. The Death Valley portion is closed to vehicle use. The adjacent public land portion should also be closed.	Accept	Nearly 90 percent of dunes are in Death Valley and are already closed. No known ORV use of BLM portion. Dunes isolated from public land outside monument by Saddle Peak Hills. Would allow consistent management of dunes.
3	Close approximately 18,000 acres of public lands in the Devils Playground south of Soda lake to vehicle entry.	Rasor Open Area to the west is attracting increasng numbers of ORV users. Further expansion to the west as a result of 1982 Amendment 7 provides a larger boundary from which spillover can occur. A closure south of Soda Lake would: 1) clearly show what use patterns are allowed in the region; 2) protect cultural resources being endangered by ORV use; and 3) protect mesquite hummocks from collection for firewood and from ORV play.	Accept	The adjacent Rasor Open Area was enlarged to the west not only to provide a manageable area for ORV use, but also to provide an alternative to use of the environmentally sensitive Devil's Playground. No opportunities for recreation would be lost; rather, the two amendments complement each other. Due to the nature of existing routes, the Devils Playground is unlikely to be opened by the route designation process. Therefore, the amendment would clarify closed area management.

TABLE 2-1
Description of Amendments

Amendment Number	Amendment	Proponent's Reason For Submission	Preferred Alternative	Rationale for Selection of Preferred Alternative
	LANDS			
4	Clarify Multiple-Use-Class Guidelines for land sales. Class C: Public Lands will not be sold. Class L: Sales of public lands allowed in accordance with FLPMA and other applicable Federal laws and regulations, but only where disposal is in public interest and it is determined to be highest and best use. Proposed use must be consistent with historical use and the low-intensity management philosophy of Class L. Sales in WSAs would not be allowed until after Congress acts. Classes M and I: Sales of public lands may be allowed in accordance with FLPMA and other applicable Federal laws and regulations. Sales in WSAs would not be allowed until after Congressional action. Unclassified: Sales of public lands may be allowed. In existing guidelines, replace "disposed of or exchanged" with "through exchange, purchase, or other means."	Need to clarify Land Tenure adjustment and Asset Management in MUC classes, including disposal of public land by sale.	Accept	The Desert Plan is not specific concerning the sale of public land in all but "unclassified" areas. Proposed guidelines would complement other asset management and tenure adjustment tools (such as exchanges and Recreation and Public Purposes applications) already detailed in Land Tenure Element.

TABLE 2-1
Description of Amendments

Amendment Number	Amendment	Proponent's Reason for Submission	Preferred Alternative	Rationale for Selection of Preferred Alternative
	MULTIPLE USE CLASS CHANGES			
5	Change P.U. 44e/48e (area east of Shoshone) from "M" to "L".	This area is part of the Upper Amargosa River drainage into Grimshaw Lake and Amargosa Canyon ACECs. These ACECs are important because of their wetland habitat. The area contains the Whip Scorpion Habitat Management Area, which contains several species of invertebrates found only in this cave. In Class "M", mining plans of operation are no longer submitted for activities on less than 5 acres.	Reject	Although sensitive wildlife resources occur here, the Desert Plan designated the area Class M rather than Class L to provide for mineral access and development. The area does not have extraordinary mineral potential, so large-scale development is unlikely. The purpose of the 3809 revisions, "to reduce the regulatory burden on the mining public," only reinforces the Desert Plan's rationale in assigning an "M" classification.
	AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN			
6	Change the Creosote Rings ACEC from "unclassified" to MUC "L". (Approx. 278 acres of public lands in T. 4 N., R. 3 E., Section 17).	The approved management plan for this ACEC has identified the need to change this area to Class "L". "Unclassified" lands imply a disposal intent. The management plan commits BLM to long-term protection. The MUC should be changed to implement the management plan and to ensure consistency with class guidelines.	Accept	ACEC designation implies a long-term objective of maintaining lands in public ownership. Class L designation is more consistent with this goal. Although on-the-ground management would be no different than for "unclassified" land, class L would clearly segregate this area from the nearby Johnson Valley Open Area, resulting in less inadvertent damage from ORVs.

TABLE 2-1
Description of Amendments

Amendment Number	Amendment	Proponent's Reason For Submission	Preferred Alternative	Rationale for Selection of Preferred Alternative
7	Protect habitat of Sclerocactus polyancistrus east of Helendale by: Alternative A: Designate an ACEC Alternative B: Change those portions of this area which are unclassified to Class M.	Amendment is resubmitted. Proponent maintains that area is an important site for study of this species. Extremely rare yellow-spined form of S. polyancistrus also occurs here.	Accept Alt. A	ACEC designation would allow the development of protective measures for a representative stand of this sensitive species. Designation would ensure that such actions are implemented and monitored yearly, a process provided for in BLM's annual workplan program.
8	Designate a new ACEC (12 square miles) south of Desert Center for protection of archaeological sites. Name of ACEC will be "Alligator Rock".	Since completion of the Desert Plan, 22 archaeological sites have been recorded here; two are on the National Register of Historic Places. Recreation use presents serious threat to these cultural resources.	Accept	This very significant complex of sites represents a microcosm of the archaeology of the Indio Resource Area. It gives evidence of having had an exceptionally long and continous history of use, and is tied in by trails to all of the major rock sites in the resource area. One of the National Register sites is being published in a Cambridge University Press publication quarry sites, giving this site national significance. Class L guidelines along are insufficient to establish controls to prevent site damage. ACEC designation would allow restriction of camping and access, as well as fencing, to control inadvertent damage of sites without unduly restricting current use. A significant group of archaeological sites and their surrounding environment would be preserved.

TABLE 2-1
Description of Amendments

Amendment Number	Amendment	Proponent's Reason For Submission	Preferred Alternative	Rationale for Selection of Preferred Alternative
	GRAZING			
9	Modify Pilot Knob grazing allotment from ephemeral to ephemeral-perennial. Consider two alternatives: Altrenative A: Year-Round Grazing Alternative B: March to October Season of Use.	Operator wishes to change from a "stocker" operation to a "cow/calf" operation which requires a year-round lease.	Reject	Although perennial forage is available, year-round grazing would create significant conflicts with wildlife, while a cow/calf operation would not be feasible under seasonal grazing. Lacking the knowledge and facilities necessary to manage these conflicts, approval at this time would be pre-mature However, a perennial allotment could be re-considered after the development of an AMP which included an evaluation of range grazing capacity and the development of a monitoring system.
10	Expand Cronese Grazing Allotment. Consider three alternatives: Alternative A: Expand northeast into the Soda Mountains and west to the western edge of R. 2 E., north of T. 10 N. Alternative B: Expand west only as far as Alvord Mountains. Alternative C: Same as A. In addition, expand southeast to include all land between Cronese and Cady Mountain (formerly Afton Canyon) allotments.	Addition of these sections to the present allotment would better utilize BLM land and provide revenue from grazing fees.	Accept Alt. B	While epehemeral forage is present, there is insufficient perennial base to, warrant an ephemeral/perennial designation. Rejection of Alternatives A and C avoids conflict with wildlife (desert tortoise and bighorn sheep) and cultural values.

TABLE 2-1
Description of Amendments

Amendment Number	Amendment	Proponent's Reason For Submission	Preferred Alternative	Rationale for Selection of Preferred Alternative
11	Enlarge Ord Mountain Allotment to include acquired SP land surrounding present allotment. Consider two alternatives: Alternative A: Expand to Western Boundary of Marine Base. Alternative B: Same as A, excluding the Rodman Mountains. WILD HORSES AND BURROS	For proper range management.	Reject	See amendment nine. Little forage is available in the Rodman Mountains; that area possesses extremely sensitive wildlife and cultural values as well. Excluding the Rodman would preserve the area containing the best forage. However, a 4-mile, $20,000 fence would be required. In addition, the southern portion of this area
12	Delete the Panamint Herd Management Area (conc. areas 8, 10, & 12) of the Saline/Panamint Herd Management Planning Area for burros. WILDERNESS	Following approval of CDCA Plan, China Lake Naval Weapons Center and Death Valley National Monument completed management plans calling for removal of burros on land under their administration, making retention of burros in the Panamint Valley unfeasible.	Accept	Burro migratory patterns overlapping all three jurisdictions makes maintenance of a population in one impractical when removal would be practiced in the others.
13	Change multiple use class of the former Wilderness Study Area 341 (Santa Rosa Mountains, approximately 68,051) acres. Consider two alternatives: Alternative A: Change to Class L; designate area as an ACEC. Alternative B: Change to Class L.	The area has been dropped from WSA status due to "split estate" mineral rights. See Supplemental Information, page 2-8.	Accept Alternative A	Because of the split mineral estate and the resulting Checkerboard land ownership pattern, this area was elimnated from WSA status. Elimination of WSA status changes neither the class C designation nor the suitable for wilderness recommendation.

TABLE 2-1
Description of Amendments

Amendment Number	Amendment	Proponent's Reason for Submission	Preferred Alternative	Rationale for Selection of Preferred Alternative
				If designated wilderness, Southern Pacific (or its successors in interest of the mineral estate) would retain valid existing rights to surface entry. Class L would be more consistent with the management problems this could create. However, there are sensitive wildlife values (including a large herd of Peninsular bighorn sheep) within the area that do require more protection than would be provided by class L guidelines alone. ACEC designation would provide a framework for additional protection measures not stressed in the 1980 Santa Rosa Habitat Management Plan because of the existing IMP protection.
14	Change multiple use class of the former Wilderness Study Area 344 (Orocopia Mountains) to Class L (approximately 44,195 acres).	Most of the area was dropped from WSA status due to "split estate" mineral rights. The remaining area, still over 5,000 acres, did not meet other Section 2(c) criteria outlined in the Wilderness Act.	Accept	Elimination of WSA status changes neither the class C designation nor the suitable for wilderness recommendation. If designated wilderness, Southern Pacific (or its successors in interest of the mineral estate) would retain valid existing rights to surface entry. Class L would be more consistent with the management problems thris would create, and would provide adequate protection for the area's resources.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Amendments Thirteen and Fourteen:

Santa Rosa and Orocopia Mountains

By Federal Register publication on December 30, 1982, the Secretary of the Interior removed certain lands administered by the BLM from their status as Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) under Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), and thereby removed the "nonimpairment protection" applied to "603" lands. The Secretary's authority stems from an Interior Board of Land Appeals ruling which states that lands where the Federal Government owns the surface, but where the subsurface mineral estate is nonfederally-owned, the lands do not qualify for wilderness study under FLPMA Section 603.

The Santa Rosa Mountains (former WSA 341) and the Orocopia Mountains (former WSA 344) both contain checkerboard-ownership pattern public lands. However, certain subsurface mineral rights were retained by the original owner of the acquired lands (see amendment maps in Appendix A). Because of the deletion of these "split estate" lands from the WSA as a result of the Secretarial Order, the remaining public lands within the Santa Rosa and the majority of those within the Orocopia Mountains fail to meet the FLPMA requirements for WSA designation; therefore, these areas have ceased to exist as 603 WSAs. Within the Orocopias, a block of land over 5,000 acrs remained after this deletion. This portion of the WSA was eliminate because it did not meet the other FLPMA criteria, such as naturalness and outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

The designation or removal of WSA status is performed under the Wilderness Review Process of section 603 of FLPMA. Therefore, such an action is outside the scope of the Bureau's planning process (section 202 of FLPMA) and hence of the Desert Plan. The function of planning is to recommend whether a WSA should be formally designated as wilderness by Congress. Such recommendations were made by the Desert Plan. A plan may recommend areas outside WSA boundaries as "suitable" ("202 wilderness"), although such areas lack the "nonimpairment protection" of the Interim Management Policy (IMP). If eventually designated as Wilderness, however, these "202" areas would be under the same constraints and regulations as any other unit of the National Wilderness Preservation System. The Santa Rosa and Orocopia Mountain areas are now, due to the removal of WSA status, "202" areas: Class C (recommended suitable) regions outside of the WSAs, and not subject to IMP requirements.

Therefore, these two amendments provide the opportunity for the Santa Rosa and Orocopia Mountains to be reconsidered in view of the split-estate situation, and for an appropriate land management decision to be made. Both a continuation of Class C (suitable) status under section 202 and a variety of alternative management proposals are addressed.

TABLE 2-2
SUMMARY OF CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Resource	Unit of Measure	No Action	Preferred Alternative	Percent Change	New Percent Of Desert
Multiple Use Class (CDCA)					
C	Acres	1,839,640	1,655,940	-10	13.7 (17.3)*
L	Acres	6,070,050	6,253,750	+3	51.6 (48.5)*
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ACECs Added					
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	Acres	0	75,000		
Livestock Grazing					
Ephemeral Allotments	Number	16	16		
	Acres	1,619,879	1,619,879		
Ephemeral/Perennial	Number	65	65		
Allotments	Acres	2,462,131	2,462,131		
Perennial Allotments	Number	13	13		
	Acres	749,668	749,668		
Motorized Vehicle Access					
Open	Acres	523,000	523,000		
Limited	Acres	9,304,000	9,286,000		
Closed	Acres	1,978,000	1,996,000		
Point-to-Point Race Course/Corridors	Number	4	4		

* Percent of Area in Original Plan

TABLE 2-3

CANDIDATE AMENDMENTS --- SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

X = POSITIVE IMPACT — = NEGATIVE IMPACT

Amendment No.	Amendment	RESOURCES								USES			
		Soil - Air - Water	Botany	Wildlife	Horses/ Burros	Cultural Resources	Native Americans	Wilderness	Visual Resources	Livestock Grazing	Recreation	Lands	Geology/ Energy/ Minerals
1.	CRONESE LAKES			X									
2.	IBEX DUNES												
3.	DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND			X		X					—		
4.	LAND SALES GUIDELINES											X	
5.	PLANNING UNITS 44e/48e			X									—
6.	CREOSOTE RINGS ACEC		X										
7.	SCLERACACTUS ACEC												
	Alternative A		X	X									
	Alternative B												
8.	ALLIGATOR ROCK ACEC					X							
9.	PILOT KNOB ALLOTMENT												
	Alternative A			—						X			
	Alternative B			—						X			
10.	CRONESE LAKE ALLOTMENT												
	Alternative A			—		—							
	Alternative B									X			
	Alternative C			—		—							
11.	ORD MTN ALLOTMENT												
	Alternative A			—		—				X			
	Alternative B			—						X			
12.	PANAMINT HMA												
13.	SANTA ROSA MTNS												
	Alternative A												
	Alternative B			—		—		—			X		
14.	OROCOPIA MTNS			—				—			X		

CHAPTER 3
AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

CHAPTER III

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Affected Environment refers specifically to that limited area which may be impacted by the proposed amendment. In some amendments this may be extremely limited; in others it may apply to the entire California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA).

Sources of information are available which discuss the affected environments adequately for this document:

- The California Desert Conservation Area Plan (including overlays), 1980.

- The Appendices for the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Plan, CDCA, September 1980.

Abbreviations will be used in identifying references for this section, as follows:

- California Desert Conservation Area Plan, 1980: CDCA Plan.

- Maps contained in this Plan will be identified by their number. For example, the map on Wild Horse and Burros, Map No. 8: Map #8.

- Appendices to the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Plan for California Desert Conservation Area will be identified by the letter of the volume and the number of the appendix. For example, Appendix II, Volume A (Summary of Decisions of Resource Values) would be abbreviated as Appendix A II. Other commonly used abbreviations are Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), Wilderness Study Area (WSA), Geology-Energy-Minerals (GEM), and Multiple-Use Class (MUC).

Next is a brief tabular listing of the amendments to be considered, followed when necessary by a more in-depth discussion of each amendment discussing major resource values which may be affected by the proposal.

AMENDMENT	TITLE	REFERENCE
1	Add East and West Cronese Dry Lakes to the "significant list" in the Motor Vehicle Element and designate them "closed" to motor vehicle use.	CDCA Plan Map #17; pp 88 -89 CDD - ACEC files (Cronese Lake ACEC) Appendix A II - pp 239 - 240 pp 243 - 244 Appendix B III- pp 371 - 376
2	Add the Ibex Dunes to the "significant list" in the MV Element and designate it closed to MV use.	CDCA Plan, pp. 88 - 89 Appendix A II - pp 282 - 286 Appendix B III- pp 291 - 294
3	Close approximately 18,000 acres of public lands in the Devils Garden south of Soda Lake to Motorized Vehicle entry.	CDCA Plan pp. 87 - 91; Map #17 Appendix A II - pp 325 -327 Appendix C IV - p 31
4	Clarify multiple-use class guidelines for land sales.	CDCA Plan Chapter II - Multiple-Use Class
5	Change P.U. 44e/48e (area south of Shoshone) from M.U. class "M" to "L".	CDCA Plan Chapter II, M.U. classes Chapter III, Wildlife Element pp. 30 - 36; Map #3 Appendix A II - pp 275 - 280
6	Change the Creosote Rings ACEC from "unclassified" to MUC "L" Soggy Dry Lake - ACEC #47 (Approx. 278 acres of public land in T. 4 N., R. 3 E., Section 17).	CDCA Plan Chapter II, M.U. classes Appendix A II - pp 261 - 262 pp 265 - 266 Appendix C IV - pp 35 - 36
7	Designate a new ACEC to protect habitat of Sclerocactus polyancistus, east of Helendale, California.	CDCA Plan Chapter IV, ACEC Appendix A II - pp 245 - 246 pp 249 - 250
8	Designate a new ACEC, 12 miles south of Desert Center, for protection of archaeological sites (named Alligator Rock).	CDCA Plan Chapter IV, ACEC Appendix A II - pp 457 - 462 Appendix B III- pp 622 - 628 (Chuckwalla WSA - just south of proposed ACEC).

AMENDMENT	TITLE	REFERENCE
9	Request modification of Pilot Knob grazing allotment from ephemeral to ephemeral/perennial with year-round usage.	CDCA Plan Chapter III, Livestock Grazing Element; pp 67 - 81 Appendix A II - pp 215 - 220 Appendix B III- pp 254 - 261
10	Expand Cronese Grazing allotment to include the sections north of I-15 to Fort Irwin, east of range 2 east and abutting the present lease.	CDCA Chapter III, Livestock Grazing Element - pp 67 - 81 Appendix A II - pp 239 - 240 pp 243 - 244
11	Enlarge Ord Mountain Allotment to include acquired Southern Pacific lands, surrounded by present allotment.	CDCA Chapter III, Livestock Grazing Element - pp 67 - 81 Appendix A II - pp 257 - 260 Appendix B III- pp 272 - 276
12	Delete the Panamint Herd Unit of the Saline/Panamint Herd Management Planning Area for burros.	CDCA Chapter III, Wild Horse and Burro Element, pp 59 - 66 Appendix A II - pp 197 - 202 pp 160 - 164 Appendix B III- pp 108 - 113, pp 133 - 137, 157 - 162
13	Change former WSA 341 (Santa Rosa Mountains) from suitable to non-suitable, class "L", because of "split estate" mineral rights.	CDCA Chapter III, Wilderness Element, pp 53 - 58 Appendix A II - pp 445 - 446 pp 449 - 450 Appendix B III- pp 605 - 609
14	Change former WSA 344 (Orocopia Mountains) from suitable to non-suitable class "L", because of "split estates" mineral rights.	CDCA Chapter III, Wilderness Element, pp 53 - 58 Appendix A II - pp 452 - 456 Appendix B III- pp 616 - 621

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

AMENDMENT SEVEN:
SCLEROCACTUS ACEC

Sclerocactus polyancistrus (Mohave fishook cactus) appeared on the December 15, 1980 Federal Register list of plant taxa under review for possible listing as threatened or endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (45 CFR:82480-82569). The Mohave fishook cactus also appears on the California Native Plant Society's list of plants considered "rare and endangered" (CNPS 1980) and on the Bureau of Land Management list of candidate "sensitive" plant species (June 1981). The species is distributed within the Mojave Desert of California and Nevada at elevations ranging from 2,500 to 2,600 feet (May 1979).

While geographic distribution is widespread, plant density is apparently very low, with small "colonies" of cacti dispersed and comprised of comparatively few individuals. Collection of these attractive cacti for landscape use is one of the greatest threats to this species. Although this species is not as rare as some plants proposed for federal listing, few others are so immediately threatened by over-collection. Collection sites are easily accessible, and plants carry a high price on the market. Since the species is not officially listed, it is difficult to take effective action against illegal possession.

The population near Helendale has received special attention because it contains individuals with physical characteristics unlike those of the more northern populations. These traits represent unique genetic material of interest to researchers, many of whom are concerned about illegal collection from this popular harvesting site.

AMENDMENT EIGHT:
ALLIGATOR ROCK ACEC

The area of the proposed ACEC was rated as having high sensitivity by the Desert Plan, but not enough was known about it at that time to warrent ACEC status. Since completion of the Desert Plan, additional study of the area has yielded considerable information. There are now twenty-two known archaeological sites within the proposed ACEC, two of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Site types represented include a stone quarry, tool manufacturing sites, temporary campsites, trails, rock art, a rockshelter, and a few historic remains. Since most of the proposed ACEC has not been inventoried, there are certainly other unrecorded sites in the area. Some of the site types, such as the rock art and a "crying circle" at which mourning ceremonies were held, have been identified as sacred by Native Americans.

The complex of sites now known here is important for several reasons. The first reason is its central location in terms of other significant sites in the resource area and its ties to these sites. Not only does the trail system noted here tie the area to all the major known rock art sites in the resource area, but a subsidiary trail connects it to Corn Springs (also an ACEC), which was one of the most frequented and important locations in this part of the desert in terms of aboriginal use. Second, the collection of sites here represents a microcosm of the archaeology in the resource area. Nearly every known site type common to the resource area is represented within the proposed ACEC boundaries. Finally, evidence obtained from the quarry site indicates that a fairly long time span may be represented by the archaeology in the area. The quarry gives evidence of having been used for thousands of years. For all these reasons, the archaeological sites here have great potential for teaching us about many facets of aboriginal life.

AMENDMENT NINE:
PILOT KNOB GRAZING ALLOTMENT

The Pilot Knob allotment is presently made up of 43,010 acres of public land and 55,293 acres of land administered by the Naval Weapons Center (Mojave B Range). This allotment is an ephemeral cattle lease with a use period which usually extends from March to October. Between 1977 and 1982 there was no use of the allotment. Cattle and sheep use occurred in 1983. The operator has several cattle operations and is not solely dependent on this allotment. Crucial Desert Tortoise habitat extends into the southwestern half of the allotment. In that area, an average of 350 pounds of forage per acre of ephemeral vegetation must exist prior to turnout.

AMENDMENT TEN:
CRONESE LAKE GRAZING ALLOTMENT

This is presently an ephemeral/perennial lease for cattle on 54,250 acres of public land with an estimated carrying capacity of 1508 animal unit months (AUMs). It was at one time an ephemeral lease, but was changed to ephemeral/perennial by a 1982 Amendment to the Desert Plan.

AMENDMENT ELEVEN:
ORD MOUNTAIN GRAZING ALLOTMENT

The Ord Mountain allotment is a cow/calf ephemeral/perennial lease on 25,500 acres of public land. The estimated carrying capacity is 773 AUMs. A western

expansion of the allotment is being included in the Allotment Management Plan (AMP) now being prepared. This western expansion would include approximately 24,000 acres and an increase in perennial AUMs still to be determined. The western extension was approved in the final Desert Plan. The proposed eastern extension was considered during the Desert Planning Process as the proposed Rodman Mountains allotment. It was rejected at that time because "grazing would severely impact" the cultural values of this area, which include a listed 3200 acre National Register of Historic Places Archaeological District.

CHAPTER 4
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

CHAPTER IV

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the scientific and analytic basis for the selection of the preferred alternative. It discusses the significant impacts that are anticipated to result from both implementation and rejection of each of the amendments. Both the beneficial and adverse impacts affecting the environmental components, as discussed in Chapter 3, will be documented. This chapter also includes: unavoidable adverse impacts; the relationship between short-term use and enhancement of long-term productivity; and irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources.

Knowledge of the area and professional judgment, based on observation and analysis of similar conditions and responses in similar areas, have been used to infer environmental impacts where data is limited.

The analysis of the amendments is based on the following assumptions:

- Funds and personnel are available for implementation.
- Impacts will be monitored and adjusted as necessary.
- Minor adjustments in management may occur.
- Baseline data are accurate.

Within each amendment analysis, the discussion is organized by resource. Only those resources affected are discussed. A resource that is not expected to be affected is not addressed. Except where specifically noted, no impacts on air quality are anticipated.

SPECIFIC IMPACTS

AMENDMENT ONE:
CRONESE LAKES

Alternative A: Designate Both Lakes Closed

Cultural Resources

There are approximately 26 known archaeological sites located around the Cronese Lakes. The majority of the sites border on the shore of the lakes; each of the lakes is virtually surrounded by archaeological material. The sites appear to date from the late prehistoric period although few have been investigated. Few, if any, sites are expected to be present on the lakebeds; therefore, closure of the lakebed would protect few cultural resources. Since most sites are on the shorelines, off-road vehicle (ORV) activity there would continue to impact sites. This is especially true on East Cronese Lake. However, most of the Cronese Lake ACEC is proposed for closure by the ACEC management plan (currently being prepared); this would close the shorelines as well.

Wildlife

When holding water, the East Cronese playa is utilized by a large number of wintering waterfowl. It also serves as a migratory stopover for waterfowl, shorebirds, and a variety of water-related species such as herons and rails. Passerine species also utilize wet areas and adjacent vegetation during migration. The concentration of bird species provides a good foraging area for many different kinds of raptors. In total, approximately 75 species of birds have been observed here.

Designating the East Cronese playa as "closed" to vehicle use is a positive administrative action for wildlife resources. It would protect playa surfaces and underlying soils which contain the eggs of invertebrates that supply a food source for migrant and resident birds. It would also prevent disturbance to migrant birds and to waterfowl when surface waters are present. Vegetation present around the playa edge would also receive less impact as the result of reduced levels of vehicle use on playa surfaces from closure designation.

West Cronese playa, which does not fill with water on a regular basis, is not utilized as a migratory stopover to the extent that East Cronese playa is.

Botany

Several exotic plant species have become established on the lakebeds, particularly near the inlet area at the south end of East Cronese Lake. The growth of one of the non-native plant species present, Russian Thistle (Salsola iberica), is stimulated by surface ground disturbance, and is therefore often encouraged by activities such as motorized vehicle use which break the surface crust. Closure of the lakebeds to ORV use may somewhat impede the spread of Russian Thistle, but other surface disturbing events such as flooding could encourage further growth if seed is still present. If all surface disturbance is eliminated, Russian Thistle will gradually disappear.

Two rare plant species occur in or near the dry lake beds, and both have been placed on the California Native Plant Society List #4 ("Plants rare in California, Common Elsewhere"). These plants, Sand Linanthus (Linanthus arenicola) and Small-flowered Androstephium (Androstephium breviflorum), are not considered BLM sensitive species, nor are they recognized as endangered on state or federal listings. Both species may benefit somewhat if the lakebeds are closed to vehicular travel, since potential damage from crushing would be reduced.

Wilderness

Current levels of vehicle use (limited to existing ways) are not impairing the wilderness values of WSA 242 (Soda Mountains, recommended non-suitable for wilderness designation). Closure of the two lakes would result in minor positive impacts on these values by protecting them in the future.

Recreation

Because of the low number of ORV users of East and West Cronese Dry Lakes, the impacts of closure would be minimal. East Cronese Lake is a popular bird watching area. However, closure would have little effect on this activity since access to this area would still be provided by a powerline road.

Alternative B: Reject Amendment (No Action)

Not designating the East and West Cronese playas as "closed" would have a negative impact on wildlife resources. However, this negative impact would occur during the interim period leading to ACEC Management Plan development and implementation. No specific management approach to vehicle use on or near playa surfaces would be undertaken during this period, leading to continued vehicle use at present levels. The issue of motorized vehicle use in the Cronese

Lakes ACEC is central to the protection of both cultural and wildlife resources. Management prescriptions would be designed and implemented which would control vehicle use in sensitive resource areas. The ACEC Management Plan is currently being prepared.

If East and West Cronese Lakes were to remain open to vehicle travel, some decline in general vegetation would likely continue, particularly at the lakes' edges. Exotic annual plants such as Russian Thistle may persist or spread, while Salt Cedar would not be significantly affected.

AMENDMENT TWO:
IBEX DUNES

Alternative A: Desginate BLM-Administered Portion of Dunes Closed

Cultural Resources

The area immediately surrounding and including the dune system has sensitive cultural values (Craib 1978). There have been few impacts on these sites in the past due to the minimal use the dunes receive. Closure would ensure few impacts occur in the future.

Wildlife

Closure would benefit the wildlife species which utilize the dune system. It would prevent impacts resulting from the loss of vegetation, collapse of burrows, direct mortality, and increased noise levels. Closure is compatible with management objectives for Death Valley National Monument (DVNM), where 90 percent of the dune system is located. Use of the dune system outside of DVNM would apply inconsistent management between the National Park Service and BLM and contribute to increased administrative and environmental conflicts.

Recreation

Because of the low level of use presently occurring on the portion of the Ibex Dunes administered by BLM this closure would have minimal effects on recreationists. Opportunities exist approximately five miles away at Dumont Dunes to compensate for whatever loss of dune recreation opportunities occur. Since the Bureau administers only about ten percent of the Ibex Dunes and the remainder is administered by the National Park Service as a closure, this amendment would allow a consistent management of the Dunes.

The closure would be effective since present use is low and the closure of the remainder of the dunes is patrolled by the Park Service. Access to the dunes is through the National Monument only, as the dunes are topographically isolated from the Bureau-administered lands to the east by the Saddle Peak Hills.

Alternative B: Reject Amendment (No Action)

There would be no significant impacts on recreation as past use has been minimal. However, any use of the dune system by motorized vehicles could have a negative effect on wildlife, varying with the intensity and duration of use. Impacts would include displacement of species, direct mortality, and reduction in carrying capacity of the area from loss of burrows and other places of refuge and loss of vegetational cover.

AMENDMENT THREE:
DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND

Alternative A: Close 18,000 Acres South of Soda Dry Lake

Cultural Resources

There are approximately 55 recorded archaeological sites in this area. These sites include camps, special use sites, and milling stations. A variety of artifacts occur including projectile points, grinding stones, stone and bone tools, ceramics, shell beads, and many other artifacts.

The area is currently Class "L", but there is some overflow of ORVs from the Rasor Open Area directly to the west. This "spillover" is causing extensive and increasing damage to the archaeological sites in the area, especially the western side of the proposed closed area, which contains the majority of the known sites.

An effective closure would help to protect archaeological resources since vehicles would not be allowed. A closure would not provide a buffer between the Rasor Open Area and the Mesquite Hills/Crucero ACEC, as the ACEC lies too far to the west to be completely "sheltered" by the closure.

Wildlife

Vehicle closure south of the Soda Springs ACEC management area would benefit wildlife resources in two ways:

- Vehicle restriction would reduce environmental impacts associated with motorized vehicle use off-road.

- Closure would provide a significant buffer zone between the Rasor Open Area (which was significantly expanded by a 1982 Plan Amendment) and the Fort Soda ACEC. This should significantly reduce "spillover" levels between the Open Area and the ACEC.

Impacts on wildlife which should be significantly reduced include loss of vegetation, lowered area carrying capacity, direct mortality, and displacment from areas of increased ORV use.

Wilderness

There would be no significant impact on WSA 243.

Recreation

There would be minimal impacts on recreationists. Sufficient opportunities exist in the Rasor Open Area to accommodate the sporadic use which occurs on this parcel. The closure would avoid the likelihood of taking the area through the route designation process, only to determine that roads would not be opened due to the sensitivity of the area.

No impacts are anticipated on other recreational uses such as hiking, or horseback riding. This closure would maintain the needed control on the Devil's Playground area to protect sensitive resources and discourage the spread of ORV activity.

Geology-Energy-Minerals

Since operations in both class L and closed off-road areas require plans of operation, this amendment would have no effect.

Alternative B: Reject Amendment (No Action)

Cultural Resources

Rejecting the amendment will result in the continued degradation of archaeological sites in the area and reduce the opportunity for protection and enforcement.

Wildlife

Failure to change current management could result in increased use levels from inadvertent "spillover" from the adjacent Rasor Open Area and a concomitant increase in ORV "spillover" into the Soda Springs ACEC. Enforcement problems associated with prevention of off-road free-play in an area where vehicles are permitted on roads and trails would be greatly increased above those levels which would exist if the entire area were simply "closed." Both direct impacts on wildlife species from motorized vehicle use and impacts on the ACECs wildlife populations would increase.

Recreation

If the area is not closed, vehicle routes would be identified by the route designation process. Due to the limited nature of the existing road network and the sensitive resources present in the area, it is likely that no routes would be opened, resulting in a de-facto closed area. Prevention of inadvertent "spillover" from the Rasor Open Area would be difficult, since there would be no signing as there would be for a formal closure. The amount of "spillover" would probably not be high, but could lead to some conflicts with dispersed recreation and with other sensitive values.

AMENDMENT FOUR:
LAND TENURE GUIDELINES

Alternative A: Accept Amendment

At present, the goals of the Land Tenure Element emphasize exchanges with the State of California and other major landowners such as the Southern Pacific Land Company. Other disposal techniques such as land sales offer a viable means of adjusting land tenure and improving land management efficiency, but are not specifically addressed in the Land Tenure Element.

An amendment to guide the sale of public lands designated multiple use Class L, M, and I or "unclassified" would complement the other management tools (such as land exchanges and Recreation and Public Purposes applications) available to the Bureau and described in the Land Tenure Adjustment Element.

Alternative B: Reject Amendment

Currently, the plan does not specifically address the sale of public lands in classes L, M, and I. While authority to dispose of these lands through sales exists, further guidance is necessary to clarify the use of sales in these classes. In most cases land has been placed in a particular multiple use class to provide management guidance; that is, a commitment to retain the land in Federal ownership is implied. However, instances may arise where the highest and best public good is served by land sale rather than by the other asset management tools. For example, Class L, M, and I lands adjacent to privately owned parcels might more profitably be placed into private ownership. The Plan would provide no mechanism for guiding such a sale if the proposed guidelines are rejected (other thean changing the multiple use class to "unclassified" by plan amendment).

AMENDMENT FIVE:
PLANNING UNITS 44e and 48e

Alternative A: Change From Class M to Class L

Wildlife

A classification change from M to L would (positively) benefit on-site wildlife resources as well as those located immediately south of these lands. BLM-administered lands located here have a small thermal cave which contains several species of endemic cave invertebrates, including a whip-scorpion, millipede, harvestman, and beetle. The small size of this cave severely restricts distribution of these invertebrate species. Total dependence on the unique environment provided by the warm cave temperature and high relative humidity warrants protective management of this area. Protective measures set forth in an existing Habitat Management Plan call for restricting vehicle use and developing site-specific mitigation measures. A change to Class L would provide greater flexibility developing stipulations for any surface or subsurface disturbing activities associated with mineral exploration or development.

Change to Class L would help to maintain the wetland habitats present immediately downstream in the Grimshaw Lake basin and in Amargosa Canyon. Both of these areas have been designated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs). Surface waters and associated wetland vegetation provide habitats for a variety of rare and unique forms of wildlife, including the Amargosa vole, Least Bell's Vireo, California Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Amargosa speckled dace, and Amargosa River pupfish. Several of these species are currently being considered for federal listing as threatened or endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Reductions in water supply, or deterioration in water quality from uses upstream from these ACECs could have a serious impact on these resources. Recent changes in the 3809 surface mining regulations no longer require submission of a Mining Plan of Operations for surface-disturbing activities of less than five acres. This requirement is still in effect for class L designated lands. A Notice of Intent to mine is required for such activities on class M lands; however, change to Class L provides additional necessary review time to develop these stipulations and to consult with other state and federal wildlife agencies.

Botany

No rare plants have been recorded on the California Native Plant Society maps or in District BLM files for this area. However, several rare and endangered plant species are known to occur in nearby areas, and may be present within the area proposed for amendment. For this reason, mining operations initiated without site-specific clearance for sensitive resources may damage or destroy individuals or populations of rare and endangered plants. Because of the high occurrence of rare and/or sensitive plants near this region (and therefore, the high probability of occurrence within the area), plans of operation, as required by Class L guidelines for mining operations of any size, would help to avoid possible destruction of these species.

Wilderness

Approximately one-third of the area is within a non-suitable portion of WSA 145 (Resting Springs Range). A change from class M to class L would have little immediate effect on wilderness values as the WSA would continue to be managed according to the Interim Management Policy. Should Congress release the area from further wilderness consideration, wilderness values would be better protected under class L than under class M.

Recreation

Impacts on recreationists would be minimal since use of the area is low. The change would be more consistent with present recreation management objectives.

Geology-Energy-Minerals

Under the revised 43 CFR 3809 regulations, a major difference exists in mineral development guidelines between classes M and L. The 3809 regulations generally provide for three levels of surface disturbance, each requiring a different action by the mining operator:

1. "Casual Use" -- Those activities that ordinarily result in negligible disturbance of Federal Lands and resources. Neither notification of nor approval by the Bureau is required.

2. "Notice" -- Operator wishes to conduct surface-disturbing operations (that are non-casual use) that result in cumulative disturbance of five acres or less. This requires a letter of notification ("notice") but no approval by the Bureau. The BLM must determine that undue or unnecessary degradation would not occur through compliance monitoring of the operation. Operators must reclaim all surficial disturbance. No environmental assessment is prepared. A fifteen-day timeframe is required by regulation. This category applies only to non-ACEC portions of class M (and lands desginated as either "open" or "limited" to motorized vehicle access).

3. "Plan of Operations" -- Operator wishes to conduct either:

   - Non-casual use activities in ACECs (regardless of class), closed ORV areas, and all of class L (regardless of amount of surface disturbance); or,

   - Operations that result in more than five acres of surface disturbance in one year.

   This category requires submission of a plan of operations as well as approval by the Bureau. An environmental assessment is prepared with a 30-day timeframe.

A change from class M to class L would result in delays for operators (see above, category 3). Pre-operational stipulations developed as a result of the environmental assessment could add a perceived level of protection of resources, rather than depending on operational compliance checks. However, the class change would create an additional regulatory requirement for the mining public.

Alternative B: Reject Amendment (No Action)

Wildlife

Failure to change land status from Class M to Class L would negatively affect wildlife resources of special management concern which are present both on-site and downstream in the Amargosa River drainage. Class guideline changes would provide for more restrictive control on a variety of uses. While a Notice of Intent to mine would still be required for mining operations of less than five acres on Class M lands, and the Bureau has the opportunity to provide input, the operator would only be required to wait fifteen days (instead of 30 in Class L) before initiating operations. This would provide very little time for detailed analysis of proposed operations and development of site-specific mitigation measures for the protection of sensitive resources. Coordination time between other agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game would also be greatly reduced.

Recreation

There would be no negative impacts on recreation use. Present minimal use levels would continue.

Geology-Energy-Minerals

If the class change is not approved, then the provisions of either category 2 or 3 (dependent on operation size) would apply. If a notice is filed, an operator must state that he would not cause undue or unnecessary degradation and that he would reclaim all disturbed areas. The requirement to reclaim, together with the mandatory inspection, reduces the amount of paperwork that an operator need file. In addition, the notice procedure can be a reasonable balance between reduction of administrative requirements of the mining public and resource protection (see 48 FR 8815, March 2, 1983).

AMENDMENT SIX:
CREOSOTE RINGS ACEC

Alternative A: Change From Unclassified to Class L

Botany

This change would positively benefit vegetational resources by reducing detrimental effects associated with off-road vehicle use. The current "unclassified" land status of the ACEC, and proximity to a very popular ORV Open Area, has led to confusion as to levels and types of vehicle uses which are allowed here. Under the Desert Plan guidelines for "unclassified" lands, vehicle use is restricted to public roads. No change in this management approach is intended as a result of land classification change. However, the change to Class L is consistent with the level of protection required for vegetational resources present within the ACEC and would provide visitors to the area with a clearer understanding of permitted vehicle uses. It would also emphasize the Bureau's intention of long-term management of these lands.

Recreation

There will be no anticipated recreational impacts. The Johnson Valley Open Area (which is two miles north of the area) would not be in conflict and there are no anticipated trials due to the proximity of the open area.

Alternative B: Reject Amendment (No Action)

Botany

Failure to initiate this action would result in continued motorized vehicle impacts to vegetational resources at present or increasing use levels within the ACEC. The ACEC is located immediately adjacent to a popular ORV Open Area, and along a primary means of access to Soggy Dry Lake. Motorcycle trails currently crisscross the ACEC. Continued unrestricted free-play activities here could conceivably result in the eventual destruction or severe degradation of the vegetational resources which the ACEC was nominated to protect.

Recreation

The rejection of the amendment would have no negative impacts on recreational use. It would allow for the continuation of the present minimal use.

AMENDMENT SEVEN:
SCLEROCACTUS ACEC

Alternative A: Designate a New ACEC Near Helendale

Wildlife

Designation of these lands as an ACEC would positively benefit wildlife species. Because of the somewhat isolated nature of the BLM-administered land parcels here, smaller species, or species of high population density and small home range will receive the higher degree of positive impact. Measures developed for protection of the cactus species, such as vehicle barricades and route designation, would also protect wildlife. The desert Tortoise, a BLM "Sensitive Species," would also benefit from ACEC Management

Botany

ACEC designation would benefit populations of the Mohave fishhook cactus occurring within this area. Development of specific protective measures for these populations can proceed as the ACEC management plan is formulated. ACEC designation (regardless of Class status) would ensure that protective management actions are implemented and monitored yearly, a process which is provided for in BLM's annual workplan program. ACEC designation, however, will not provide for additional protective management of populations of this species within remaining portions of its geographic range outside of the ACEC. The low densities and widely dispersed distribution of this cactus would require designation of substantial land areas in order to protect large numbers of plants through ACEC designation.

Recreation

Since the area is not intensively used, there would be no significant impacts on recreational users. Although limited camping, ORV use and target practice does occur in the area, the change in such a limited area should not effect their continued opportunities.

Alternative B: Change That Part of Area Presently "Unclassified" to Class M

Vehicle use is less restrictive in class M than on "unclassified" lands (where use is allowed only on public roads). Increased vehicle access would adversely effect the fishhook cactus as well as wildlife. There would be no guarantee that specific protective measures would be developed and implemented, as higher priority ACEC management would assure. However, specific management actions could still be taken which would protect populations of the fishhook cactus present on BLM lands hear Helendale. As circumstances warrant for the protection of these sensitive plant populations, construction of protective fences or barriers, or route closures could be utilized. A change to class M would

also retain the land within Federal ownerhsip, which might not occur if the lands remained "unclassified" and were not designated an ACEC.

Alternative C: Reject Amendment

Wildlife

Failure to either designate these lands as an ACEC or reclassify all to Class M would negatively affect wildlife species present here. Some of these lands are currently "unclassified", and could be removed from federal land management and eventually developed or significantly altered. ACEC designation implies a recognition of sensitive resources in need of special management attention, provides a mechanism to manage these resources, and a commitment for the long-term management and retention of these lands.

Class M designation provides a clear set of management guidelines governing uses and also implies a commitment for the long-term management.

Botany

Failure to designate this area as an ACEC would have a negative impact on populations of the Mohave fishhook cactus. Protective measures such as barriers, route closure, signing, and increased ranger patrol, although possible outside of a designated ACEC, would probably not be accomplished due to priority programming. Negative impacts to this population would be greatest if lands were transferred out of federal management into private control.

Recreation

Rejection of the amendment would have no anticipated negative impacts. The continuation of the present minimal use could occur.

AMENDMENT EIGHT:
ALLIGATOR ROCK ACEC

Alternative A: Designate a New ACEC Near Desert Center

Cultural Resources

Archaeological sites within the proposed Alligator Rock ACEC are currently being damaged by casual use of the area for camping and other recreational purposes. Some artifacts recorded two years ago have also been removed, and recently

evidence of rock hounding has been discovered near the quarry site. Preparation and enforcement of a managment plan would have as its goal protection of cultural resources without unduly restricting current use. Such a management plan, based on a Class II cultural survey, would identify the following:

- Locations where camping would be restricted, as well as recommended camping areas;
- Areas where access would be restricted;
- Areas where fencing would be required;
- Interpretive locations and materials where appropriate;
- Areas in which data retrieval are needed or appropriate;
- Locations of academic interest. The quarry site is being published this year in a Cambridge University Press volume on quarry sites across the nation, giving this site national significance.
- Reassessment of boundaries, including possible size reduction.

The ultimate result of these measures would be preservation of a significant group of archaeological sites and their surrounding environment (see figures 4-1 and 4-2).

Botany

An unusually large population of a sensitive cactus species has been mapped in the area of the proposed ACEC. This species, Alverson's Foxtail Cactus (Coryphantha vivipara ssp. alversonii), is a candidate for federal listing currently under status review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1980) and is considered as a BLM-sensitive species. The California Native Plant Society lists this species as rare and endangered and declining in numbers in parts of its range. Although this species has a fairly wide distribution across rocky slopes and fans in the southwest Mojave and Colorado Deserts, it rarely occurs in large numbers. Alverson's Foxtail Cactus is threateneed by over-collection and is being sold illegally by nursuries and collectors.

The population near Alligator Rock is prone to collection pressure, as it is accessible by several roads into the area, and it is close to a nearby town, Desert Center. Surface disturbances, such as mining operations, also potentially threaten this species. ACEC designation may provide additional protection to this cactus if protective measures such as increased patrol and limitations on surface disturbances are implemented.

Recreation

The area receives relatively low levels of use. Because measures developed by the management plan sould be designed to protect resources without unduly restricting current use, there would be few significant impacts.

FIGURE 1
Alligator Rock Proposed ACEC: Mortar and Pestle

FIGURE 2
Alligator Rock Proposed ACEC: Rockshelter

Geology-Energy-Minerals

Controls on mining within an ACEC do not differ from those within a class L area (43 CFR 3809). Both require plans of operations. The designation of an ACEC may cause an operator to file a plan of operations for "casual use" activities which would not normally require a plan in a class L area, because such "casual use" in an ACEC would seem more likely to impact cultural resources.

This area has moderate to high mineral potential for gold. One mine near the southern border of the ACEC has been reopened on a "casual use" scale, and the operator is using a shovel to feed a sluice box arrangement which requires hauled water. Several large mining companies are examining the northwestern Chuckwalla Mountains, including parts of the proposed ACEC, for the possible presence of a large, low-grade gold deposit. If such a deposit were found, the presence of an ACEC would slow, but not stop, mining.

Alternative B: Reject Amendment (No Actions)

Cultural Resources

The no action alternative will result in the near total destruction of most of the archaeological sites in this area within five years. This prediction is based upon the level of disturbance that has occurred within the area in the past two years. Most of this disturbance is caused inadvertently by people using the area for other purposes. Class L guidelines alone would not prevent this disturbance. In fact, Class L allows the single most serious threat to the sites, which is casual camping. Sites containing rock rings, grinding stones, and other artifacts are being torn apart by persons building camp fire rings. The damage is not deliberate vandalism; rather, the stones are just handy and probably not recognized as archaeological materials by the general public. The route designation process would also be incapable of preventing this disturbance. Without the knowledge of the location of sites which could be obtained by survey, route designation would be of little use in preventing site damage. In addition, a small amount of disturbance has been caused by rock hounding and by deliberate theft of artifacts.

Recreation

Rejection of the amendment would allow the continuation of the present low levels of use.

AMENDMENT NINE:
PILOT KNOB GRAZING ALLOTMENT

Alternative A: Establish a Year-long Ephemeral/Perennial Allotment

Cultural Resources

Archaeological values in the allotment would be subjected to increased impacts from livestock grazing. The effects of grazing on archaeological sites are not well understood or clearly documented, although personal observation by archaeologists in the Desert District indicates clearly that grazing animals do damage sites. Standing historic structures such as fences and stone walls have been collapsed by grazing animals. Scatters of surface artifacts have also been impacted, artifacts and features damaged and their relationships and contexts destroyed. However, the degree to which this type of activity may damage a site or the cumulative impacts of long term grazing on archaeological materials would vary, depending upon intensity of livestock use.

Archaeological resources occur on the shoreline of Cuddyback Lake, in the Black Hills, and at Blackwater Well. The site at Blackwater Well (proposed, and later rejected as an ACEC during the preparation of the Desert Plan) could suffer increased impacts from livestock since the well is a major water source.

Wildlife

Alternative A would have a negative impact on habitat condition in the Western Mojave Desert Crucial Habitat WHMA (W-21). Two important species in the WHMA, the desert tortoise (BLM sensitive species) and the mohave ground squirrel (State listed - Rare) would be negatively impacted as a result of overutilization of shrubs and perhaps ephemeral vegetation. Trampling of burrows and soil compaction is a potential problem, but the degree of adverse impact is unknown at this time.

About 50 percent of this allotment on BLM land is classified as highly crucial habitat for the desert tortoise. Unless it were fenced, the crucial habitat could not be managed in compliance with CDCA Plan requirements for grazing in highly crucial habitat. Two conditions couldn't be met: livestock be turned out after "tortoise emergence," and that an average of 350 lbs. of ephemeral forage per acre (minimum) exist prior to and during grazing.

Botany

One rare plant species which occurs on steep, rocky slopes within the allotment is currently a candidate for listing under status review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and is considered as rare, but not endangered by the California Native Plant Society (List 3). This BLM sensitive species, Panamint Live-forever (Dudleya saxosa ssp. saxosa), may be browsed by cattle, but since this area has been grazed continuously since the early sixties, any impacts to this species from grazing would not be new.

This amendment would increase the grazing use to include the months of July, August, and September over that period historically used. This change is not likely to increase any impacts to the Panamint Live-forever, since this plant dies back in summer months and is not available as potential forage during this time.

A second rare plant species which may occur inside the allotment is listed by the California Native Plant Society as rare in California, but is fairly common in Nevada. For this reason, BLM does not consider it a sensitive species, nor is it recognized by the US Fish and Wildlife Service as a candidate for listing. This amendment would not affect this species, the Death Valley Round-leaved Phacelia (Phacelia mustelina), any more than the current grazing permit does, as this winter annual is dormant during the period of extended use proposed by this amendment.

Wilderness Study Areas 173 and 173A

Changing from seasonal to year-round grazing without changing the total forage utilization would not have any adverse impacts on wilderness values, and would not impair the area's suitability for wilderness designation. Previous grazing use has not adversely affected wilderness values. In addition, grazing use is considered compatible with wilderness management when carried out according to an allotment management plan.

Livestock Grazing

The amendment would be feasible due to the presence of of perennial forage species and available year-round water (which would be piped in from Navy lands). The estimated carrying capacity would be 1500 animal unit months (AUMs), or approximately a 125-head herd (average use in the mid-1970s was approximately 3600 AUMs for the entire allotment). Since a year-long, ephemeral/perennial lease would be granted, the proponent's goal--a cow/calf operation could be attained (see figure 3).

Allocations of forage would be determined when the allotment management plan (AMP) was developed. Based on ocular reconnaissance, enough perennial forage appears to be available to support a perennial allocation. The allocation would not exceed the carrying capacity of the range, thereby preventing overutilization of vegetation and maintaining a stable range condition. The carrying capacity would be determined during AMP development by a variety of techniques, including aerial photography, ground truthing, and representative transects. Allocations to wildlife would be made as appropriate.

FIGURE 3
Pilot Knob Grazing Allotment: Northeastern Portion

FIGURE 4
Central Rodman Mountains

Alternative B: Establish A Seasonal Ephemeral/Perennial Allotment

The livestock operation would be reduced to a shorter portion of the year. The same amount of range facilities would be available, but use would be restricted to eight months, not including ephemeral use. Thus, the operation would be an ephemeral/perennial lease, as in alternative A, but with a shorter perennial base operation. This may require the livestock class to be changed from a cow/calf to (possibly) a steer/stocker operation. This would allow the rancher the flexibility to fluctuate his herd size based on forage availability and to completely sell his herd during periods of non-use as required by the lease. Economic stress would occur with the large cash outlay to purchase stockers, while large one-time returns would result from sales at the end of the season. The cow/calf operation would be more economically stable.

Alternative C: Reject Amendment (No Action)

Cultural Resources

No significant impacts.

Wildlife

Overall, habitat condition would remain stable. Perennial shrub cover would be maintained or enhanced and therefore wildlife populations would remain stable or increase. This grazing system would allow for proper management of the highly crucial habitat for the desert tortoise; livestock would only be allowed on the range after "tortoise emergence," and an average minimum of 350 lbs. of ephemeral forage per acre would be maintained.

Livestock Grazing

The operator would continue to use this allotment under ephemeral authorization for extended periods of 8 to 12 months. Since ephermal does not refer to the type of forage available, but only the forage availability, long term (i.e., year long) leasing could occur. The operator would suffer economically because the lack of an assured grazing lease would increase the difficulty of obtaining loans for operating funds.

AMENDMENT TEN:
CRONESE LAKES GRAZING ALLOTMENT

Alternative A: Expand Allotment

Cultural Resources

The most sensitive portion of the proposed extension area is the Coyote Lake shoreline and the area just south of the lake, where there are numerous camps

and special use sites. There are a variety of other sites within the proposed expansion area including quarry/workshops and sites associated with Pleistocene Lake Manix, dating perhaps from 18,000 to 10,000 B.C. Several of these sites have been determined as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Approval of the amendment would result in greater impact to archaeological sites. General impacts of grazing are described by Amendment Nine.

Wildlife

Expansion of this grazing allotment would have a negative impact on wildlife resources in general due to increased competition for available forage with herbivorous species, and a subsequent adverse impact on populations of predatory species which, in turn, rely on these herbivorous species as a food source. Species which would be adversely affected by the expansion would include the desert tortoise, desert bighorn sheep, and Mojave fringe-toed lizard. Desert tortoise populations range from a low of 0 to 20 per square mile over most of the allotment, to a high of 20 to 50 per square mile in the southwestern portion of the allotment expansion area. Tortoise populations would be most adversely affected by increased competition for available annual forage. Although a survey of the Soda Mountains by the California Department of Fish and Game failed to observe any sheep in this range in 1970, the CDFG indicated that the range is utilized on a transient basis by bighorn, most probably from a resident herd located immediately to the north in the Avawatz Mountains (Weaver and Mensch 1970). The Mojave fringe-toed lizard, a highly specialized species confined to areas of fine windblown sand, may be adversely affected through collapse of burrows and the loss of other important places of refuge by cattle trampling.

Wilderness Study Area 242

The proposed action is acceptable under the IMP, so long as specific activities do not impair wilderness suitability. The environmental review of the Allotment Management Plan, when developed, would provide specific details pertaining to use and development of the WSA, and conditions of use would be developed at that time to insure the protection and nonimpairment of wilderness values. Grazing allowed at the time of Congressional wilderness designation would be allowed to continue.

Livestock Grazing

An extension of approximately 8000 acres would be provided on the northeastern border and 64,000 acres on the western boundary. The northeastern extension has been proposed to bring the allotment boundary adjacent to the natural boundary of the Soda Mountains. This extension would also provide some additional forage allocations from canyon bottoms, but the majority of land would be too steep to be suitable for grazing. The western extension includes a very large area of unfenced land, with the majority being suitable only for ephemeral usage. The

operator wants to include this region for additonal forage because of the Southern Pacific Railroad lands he leases. Several military-use dirt roads cross this proposed extension. No water facilities exist on public lands within the expansion area. Carrying capacity would be determined at the time of AMP development as described for amendment nine, alternative A. Based on ocular reconnaissance, however, it does not appear that a sufficient perennial base is available to support a perennial allocation. If made, such an allocation would probably result in a declining range condition, particularly in the western portion of the expansion area.

Alternative B: Modified Expansion

Cultural

Alternative B would result in impacts similar to, but less extensive than, those described for Alternative A.

Wildlife

Adverse impacts to bighorn sheep would be eliminated in Alternative "B" because of the removal of the northeastern portion of the expansion which serves as a transient bighorn range. Impacts to desert tortoise populations would also be significantly reduced in Alternative "B", because areas of highest tortoise densities would also be eliminated from allotment expansion. Some positive benefits to wildlife species may be achieved through development of additional water sources for livestock, and by construction of fences which would control vehicle use.

Livestock Grazing

The western expansion would be limited to the western edge of the Alvord Mountains and the area east of the Fort Irwin-Manix access road, an area of 26,000 acres. This expansion would be considered strictly ephemeral range, and would not include half of the rancher's private leased land. However, only eight miles of new fence would be required for the western boundary, which would utilize natural boundaries and existing fencing.

Alternative C: Expand Allotment to Northeast, West, and Southeast

Cultural Resources

An expansion into the Afton/Mojave Sink area could result in impacts on known sites. Levels of impact would depend on the level of use and the nature of range improvements. Although little inventory has been done, the most sensitive area would probably be in the Mojave Sink.

Wildlife

Expansion of the grazing allotment south of the highway would have a negative impact on wildlife resources. This impact would ocur primarily from further encroachment into the range of the Cady bighorn sheep range. Cattle-bighorn competition for available forage in these mountains would increase over present levels.

Livestock Grazing

Under this alternative, an extension of approximately 8000 acres would be provided on the northeastern border, a 64,000 acres on the western boundary, and a 33,280 acre extension south of Interstate 15. Impacts of the western and northeastern extensions would be as described for Alternative A. Portions of the southeastern expansion would provide some additional perennial forage allocations from canyon bottoms, but the majority of this extension would be too steep to be suitable for grazing. The remaining half of this extension is sandy flat area suitable for grazing.

The southeastern expansion would improve the management of the Cronese Lake and Cady Mountain (formerly Afton Canyon) allotments by allowing livestock to pass from one to another more easily. Rather than having to trail or truck cattle, the operator could allow animals to drift across this area (which lies between the two existing allotments).

Alternative D: Reject Amendment (No Action)

Wildlife

Rejection of this allotment expansion would prevent conflicts associated with competition for available forage. The kinds of impacts and the wildlife species which would be affected are described under Alternative A. Positive impacts to wildlife species would be greater under Alternative D "no action," than for Alternative B which would provide for retention of a portion of the proposed expansion area.

Livestock Grazing

No change in current boundary of the Cronese Allotment would be allowed. The operator would continue to have some drift of livestock to the northeast along the Soda Mountains. Livestock would not be allowed to the west of the allotment on public lands. This would render the rancher's private railroad lands useless since the cost of fencing his privately-controlled lands would be prohibitive.

AMENDMENT ELEVEN:
ORD MOUNTAIN GRAZING ALLOTMENT

Alternative A: Expand Allotment

Cultural Resources

Although there are scattered known sites throughout the proposed expansion area, the region of greatest concern is the Rodman Mountains. This area contains a 3200-acre National Register of Historic Places Archaeological District (listed). The archaeological resources within the district includes considerable rock art, geoglyphs, rock rings, camps and milling stations. It was these values that led to the rejection of the proposed Rodman Mountains allotment by the Desert Plan (see CDCA Plan, Appendix F, pages 83, 86 and 88). Studies done since that time indicate that this area is even more sensitive than previously thought. Since many of the sites are located around the same natural water sources that livestock would be expected to use, there could be considerable impact. Other impacts could occur by livestock and ranchers walking over the sensitive geoglyphs and other similar sites.

General impacts are the same as those described for Amendment Nine.

Wildlife

Accepting this alternative would have a negative impact on wildlife resources. Approximately 40 percent of the proposed allotment extension area lies within the Newberry/Granite Mountains Raptor Breeding Area. The area has been identified for special management attention in the Desert Plan due to the presence of concentrations of eyries of several different raptor species. The following raptor species are known to nest in the area: Prairie Falcon, Golden Eagle, American Kestrel, and Great Horned Owl. Eyries are principally located in the vicinity of Sheep Spring, which is the primary source of water for the Rodman Mountains.

The California Department of Fish and Game has constructed two small game guzzlers in the central portion of the proposed allotment extension, primarily to provide a reliable source of water for cottontail, chukar, and mourning dove populations. A large natural rock tank which serves as a water collector is located in the northcentral portion of the proposed extension, approximately two miles southeast of Sheep Spring.

In addition to several species of raptors, the desert tortoise, another species of primary management concern, is present in densities ranging from 0 to 20 per square mile, to 50 to 100 per square mile. Highest densities are located in the south-central portion of the extension. This portion of the Rodman Mountains has also historically contained a herd of desert bighorn sheep. An inventory of this range conducted by the CDFG in 1970 failed to locate any sign of sheep use (Weaver and Mensch 1970). Sheep Spring, however, was a critical source of water supply for this herd.

Impacts on wildlife species resulting from livestock grazing would be principally the result of competition for food and water. Cattle use here would contribute to lowered area carrying capacity for the small mammal populations which provide a prey base for raptors, and with other species such as the desert tortoise which may rely on many of the same forage plants. Cattle use of Sheep Spring, which is an important source of water for many species of wildlife, and located in the area in which most raptors eyries are situated, would also have a negative impact on these resources. However, some positive benefits may be achieved through development of additional water sources for livestock, and by construction of fences which will also serve to moderate effects associated with motorized vehicle use.

Wilderness Study Area 207

Extending a grazing allotment into a WSA, where cultural sensitivity is high near natural water sources, has the potential to cause local loss of resource values. Half of the proposed expansion area is within the Rodman Mountains WSA, which is recommended suitable for wilderness designation. The IMP allows the establishment or extension of grazing in a WSA, as long as specific activities do not impair the area's suitability for wilderness. When developed, the allotment management plan would protect sensitive resources through appropriate mitigation measures prior to approval of grazing operations. Particular attention would be paid to water developments and distribution systems to insure that they do not impair the area's cultural and wildlife wilderness values. Grazing allowed at the time of Congressional designation as wilderness would be allowed to continue.

Recreation

The expansion of the grazing allotment would have minimal impacts on the existing hiking and chukar hunting opportunities. These activities can continue to occur with little disruption.

Livestock Grazing

This extension, which contains 48,640 acres of public land, would allow the operator of the lease to utilize his railroad private land leases. The area of extension would also include 18,560 acres of the proposed Johnson Valley Grazing Allotment. This proposed allotment was to be leased as an ephemeral sheep lease. The eastern expansion of the Ord Mountain Allotment would give the rancher a natural eastern boundary on Twentynine Palms Marine Base. This extension would include perennial forage AUMs to add to the allotment's carrying capacity and some ephemeral range. Water would not be a problem, since two sources are available within the extension. Carrying capacity and forage allocation would be determined at the time of AMP development as described for amendment nine, alternative A. Based on ocular reconnaissance, sufficient forage appears to be available to support a perennial allocation which would not result in overutilization of available forage (see figure 4).

Since part of the extension lies within the Rodman Mountains WSA, preference would not be allocated unit after Congress decides on the status of the WSA. Until that time, AUMs would be allocated on a temporary, non-renewable basis.

Alternative B: Modified Expansion

Cultural Resources

Few known sites occur in this area; therefore, impacts would be minimal.

Wildlife

Exclusion of the Rodman Mountains are from the proposed expansion would remove the most sensitive area from adverse impact to wildlife resources. The amended boundaries remove Sheep Spring, two small game guzzlers, and a large natural rock tank from the allotment expansion area. Several historical raptor eyries present within the Newberry/Granite Mountains Raptor Breeding Area would also be excluded from the allotment. However, a pocket of relatively high desert tortoise densities, ranging from 50 to 100 per square mile, would still be present within the allotment expansion area. Overall, wildlife impacts would be significantly lower than those resulting from Alternative A.

Livestock Grazing

Approximately 17,000 acres of the proposed expansion, including WSA 207 and the sensitive wildlife and archaeological values of the Rodman Mountains, would be excluded from the extension. Since no part of the WSA would be included in the extension, there would be no delay in granting preference. Nearly as much forage would be available to livestock as in alternative one since the remaining acres includes the majority of the available perennial AUMs. However, approximately four miles of fence would be required (at a cost of $20,000) to extend natural barriers to keep livestock out of the excluded area.

Alternative C Reject Amendment (No Action)

Wildlife

Rejection of the amendment would prevent competition for forage and water between livestock and native wildlife. While fencing and development of additional water sources might result from livestock use in this area, these positive actions would be more than offset by the negative effects due to competition. The Habitat Management Plan planned for the Newberry/Granite Mountain Raptor Breeding Area will address the management of existing water resources in order to increase carrying capacity for prey base species for raptors. Thus, water development will take place with or without grazing.

Recreation

Rejection of the amendment would have no negative impacts, since recreation could occur as it does now.

Livestock Grazing

Under this alternative, the operator would not be able to use his private lease lands, nor could he increase his herd size. Although he would lose these opportunities to expand, his existing operation would be unaffected. Some drift problems would remain on the eastern boundary until fencing was built.

AMENDMENT TWELVE:
PANAMINT HERD MANAGEMENT AREA

Alternative A: Delete Concentration Areas 8, 10, and 12

Wildlife

Removal of burros from Panamint Valley would improve the management situation in adjacent areas where burro elimination is underway or planned. In particular, several Wildlife Habitat Managemet Areas (Hunter Mountain W-4, Argus Montains W-8, Panamint Mountains W-10, Darwin Falls ACEC) would be further protected because burros would not be moving from marginal habitat in Panamint Valley to favorable habitat in these important wildlife management areas. These surrounding areas are known to support significant numbers of bighorn sheep.

Wild Horses and Burros

Total burro removal plans have been completed for the China Lake Naval Weapons Center and the Death Valley National Monument. As a result, the Panamint Herd Management Area is nearly surrounded by lands for which total burro removal is the goal. The HMAs burro herd is not stationary; rather, it regularly migrates between the Panamint and Argus Mountains. The result is that these animals spend some portion of their yearly season within each of the three jurisdictions. Therefore, it is simply not feasible to try to maintain a burro herd within the HMA. In addition, Bureau policy, as expressed by cooperative agreements with the Naval Weapons Center and Death Valley National Monument, is to manage public land in coordination with these agencies. This amendment would allow the BLM to work cooperatively with both the Navy and the National Park Service to reduce burro population.

The Wilderness Study Area would not be impaired since removal of the animals could be accomplished outside the WSA or upon horseback within the area.

Alternative B: Reject Amendment (No Action)

Maintaining a burro herd in Panamint Valley is an unmanageable situation. There are no water sources and forage is marginal. Burros would naturally drift to more favorable habitat immediately adjacent to the area, especially during the summer and fall months when water needs are high.

As a result, continued Navy and National Park burro removal would eventually reduce the regional population to zero. If this were to be avoided, intensive management efforts (fencing, capture of drifting animals and perhaps water development) would be required. Habitat within the concentration areas may not be able to sustain burros throughout the year without supplemental feeding and water.

AMENDMENT THIRTEEN:
SANTA ROSA MOUNTAINS

Alternative A: Change from Class C to Class L; Designate As An ACEC

Cultural Resources

There are approximately 100 known sites within the area. Types of sites include villages, camps, quarries, milling stations, ceramic loci, rockshelters and lithic scatters. The entire region has a high sensitivity for cultural resources. An ACEC would serve to protect these values to a greater degree than any other non-wilderness classification.

Wildlife

The wildlife values of this area are exceptional (see figures 4-5, 4-6, and 4-7). The Santa Rosa Mountains support the largest herd of Peninsular bighorn sheep in the country. This subspecies is listed as "rare" by the California Fish and Game Commission. This amendment involves a little over fifty percent of the bighorn habitat in the Santa Rosas, virtually all bighorn habitat south of highway 74 including three key lambing areas and approximately sixty percent of the bighorn habitat designated as vital in the Santa Rosa Habitat Management Plan.

In addition, a new population of slender salamander (Batrachoseps sp.) was discovered in this area on public land in 1981. The population, which is being identified at this time, may be either a new species or an additional population of the endangered desert slender salamander known at this time from only one other location in the Santa Rosas. Other wildlife values include an identified breeding concentration area for Prairie Falcon and Golden Eagle, and important riparian habitat.

FIGURE 5
Santa Rosa Mountains

FIGURE 6
Santa Rosa Mountains

Alternative A would provide the highest level of protection for wildife outside of that provided by either the IMP or wilderness designation. An ACEC management plan would provide a framework for additional protection measures not stressed in the 1980 Santa Rosa HMP because of the existing IMP protection in force prior to the split estate decision. The ACEC management plan could address land consolidation, appropriate recreational uses, and coordination with the county and adjacent city governments. In cases where the actions are discretionary, the ACEC designation could provide nearly the same level of resource protection as is available under the IMP.

This alternative would not provide protection from non-discretionary actions such as locatable mining nor would this alternative give the same priority to land acquisition as would final designation as wilderness. Mining and the development of private inholdings pose the greatest threat to the wildlife values of this area. There is little mineral interest at this time and the general mineral potential of the area is considered low. However, there have been past claims and because of the non-discretionary nature of claims coupled with the need for new access to any area mined, even a small operation could have a very significant effect on bighorn sheep use of the area. The claimant would be required to submit a plan of operations, but in most cases impacts on bighorn sheep from mining operations could not be fully mitigated.

Wilderness

The Santa Rosa Mountains are currently a recommended suitable (Class C) area which is not a wilderness study area under FLPMA Section 603 (see Chapter 2, "Supplementary Information," page 2-9). Alternative A would generally protect natural and wilderness values of the Santa Rosa Mountains by limiting the types and degrees of uses to those that are compatible with protection of bighorn sheep and other natural resource values. ACEC designation would also provide special management attention to the area, including priority attention during the budgetary process. A detailed ACEC management plan for the area would, like the existing HMP, provide specific management objectives for the area. This amendment would not be expected to impair the area's wilderness suitability, unless non-discretionary actions (e.g., the filing of mining claims and plans) exceed what is currently anticipated.

Recreation

The change in classification would have no impacts on recreational use of the area. The WSA status provided similar restrictions to what would be imposed under class L and ACEC status.

Geology-Energy-Minerals

The lifting of 43 CFR 3802 non-impairment constraints from most areas has a net positive effect on all phases of the GEM program. The Santa Rosa Mountains are no exception. In general, the requirement that impairment be prevented has

guarantee exists that a deposit, if found, could be mined, mining companies are simply disinterested in an area. All areas outside WSAs must be managed through the 3809 regulations to prevent undue and unnecessary degradation of federal lands and resources by mining activites, rather that the more restrictive non-impairment criteria. Deposits located can be mined in such a manner, so the lifting of WSA designation may cause mining companies to take second looks at the area.

The Santa Rosa Mountains do not have a particularly high known potential for energy and minerals. Small gold deposits have been reported, but none have proven economic. Several occurrences of asbestos have been reported and mined sporadically over the years. However, demand for asbestos has dropped recently due to health concerns. Exploration in the area may increase, but without high potential for success.

Alternative B: Change From Class C to Class L; No ACEC

Cultural Resources

Class L alone would be less protective than with an ACEC. Adverse impacts are likely to increase as recreation use as the area grows.

Wildlife

The Santa Rosas would be managed under class L guidelines and the policies established in the Santa Rosa HMP. No special priority would be given to the area to fund land consolidation nor would additional protection measures be implemented to replace IMP protection. The area would be managed more actively for multiple use than under Alternative A. There would be no protection from non-discretionary actions such as mining or providing access to private inholdings.

Recreation

Use of the area would increase under class L, providing greater opportunities for most recreation types.

Wilderness

Class L would provide some protection of the natural and wilderness values of the Santa Rosa Mountains by limiting the types and degrees of use to those contained in class L guidelines. Development and motorized vehicle activity in the area could result in localized impairment of suitability for wilderness designation due to impacts on naturalness, solitude, and primitive and unconfined forms of recreation, although the entire area's wildereness values would little effected.

Alternative C: Reject Amendment (No Action)

Rejecting either alternative would continue a "suitable for wilderness" (class c) recommendation for the area. Since the area is no longer a wilderness study area under section 603 of FLPMA, it is, and would continue to the time of designation, not to be subject to the IMP and the non-impairment standards. This type of class C area is to be managed in accordance with class L guidelines until designation. Class L guidelines, while restrictive, allow uses which might locally impair the suitability of the area for wilderness designation.

The existing HMP provides administrative protection to wildlife habitat while Congressional designation would provide supplemental and stronger legislative protection. Therefore, prior to Congressional designation, the impacts of this alternative would be the same as for alternative B (i.e., possible localized impairment of wilderness values). Following Congressional designation, this alternative would provide the highest possible level of protection.

Should the area continue to be considered as a section 202 wilderness, it should be noted that the area is uniquely manageable as wilderness despite the presence of split-estate lands for several reasons:

- Deed conditions on the split-estate lands are very restrictive and as applied may limit or preclude mineral resource development.

- The goals of the cooperative agreement with the California Department of Fish and Game are consistent with the principles of wilderness management.

- The Habitat Management Plan for the area is consistent with the preservation of wilderness values.

Alternative C would provide, in the short term, the same level of protection as in Alternative B. The area would be managed under the class L guidelines and the policies established in the Santa Rosa HMP. In most cases where the Bureau has discretion wildlife values could be adequately protected under these designations. In the long term, this alternative would provide the highest level of protection if the area were designated wilderness. Wilderness designation would substantially reduce impairing of mining activities and would establish the highest priority for consolidation of public land. However, it would provide less opportunities for general recreation than either alternatives A or B.

AMENDMENT FOURTEEN
OROCOPIA MONTAINS (See Figure 8)

Alternative A: Change from Class C to Class L

Cultural Resources

There are few sites recorded in the area and there is low potential for extensive resources there. The proposed action would cause little impact, if any.

Wildlife

The Orocopia Mountains support the largest herd of desert bighorn sheep in Riverside County. Class L designation in conjunction with the Orocopia HMP would provide for the resolution of direct conflicts between bighorn sheep and recreationists. However, because class L implies a greater level of multiple use than Class C some increases in use are expected. Vehicle use, especially, is expected to increase in the northern portion of the area, where more routes of travel are located. Mining operators in the area will be required to submit a plan of operations, but in most cases, the impacts of mining on bighorn sheep can not be fully mitigated.

Botany

California Native Fan Palm oases, considered as "Unusual Plant Assemblages" (UPA) in the Desert Plan, occur in scattered localities within the Orocopia Mountains. Palm oases could be negatively impacted by a change in class guidelines. New road construction which may be allowed under Class L guidelines could potentially impact palm oases by increasing visitor use nearby. Palm groves are susceptable to fires and vandalism, both of which are more common in areas of high visitor use. If any developments requiring the use of ground water were approved by BLM in this area, significant impacts could occur to palm groves which rely on ground water. However, most other activities which BLM might approve within a Class L area would be reviewed for potential impacts to sensitive resources such as UPAs, and mitigating measures could usually be stipulated to reduce impacts to fan palm oases.

Recreation

Portions of the Orocopia Mountains have been poplar with ORV uses in the past. Class L will increase opportunities for motorized vehicle recreation.

FIGURE 7
Santa Rosa Mountains: Fan Palm Oasis
(Similar to those found in Orocopia Mountains)

FIGURE 8
Orocopia Mountains

Wilderness

As the Orocopia Mountains area is no longer a WSA and its use is subject only to the Class L gudielines (see Amendment No. 13), the proposed amendment would have no effect on uses of the area. The wilderness values of the area would be affected equally by the current situation and the proposed action, and naturalness, solitude, and unconfined forms of recreation would be adversely affected as development and motorized recreational activities extend into the area.

Geology-Energy-Minerals

The lifting of 43 CFR 3802 non-impairment constraints from most areas is a net positive effect for all phases of GEM programs for reasons stated above for Amendment 13. The Orocopia Mountains are no exception. If no reasonable guarantee exists that a deposit, if found, could be mined, mining companies are simply not interested in exploring in such an area. This has been a problem with reported talc mining claims in the southern Orocopias. The lifting of the WSA designation will replace the nonimpairment requirement with a requirement to prevent undue or unnecessary degradation. Most mines can be operated under this requirement, which will probably encourage exploration.

The Orocopia Mountains bear exploration. Recent discoveries in Imperial County, plus new geologic theories indicate a possibility of large gold deposits along the Orocopia Mountains Thrust and associated fault zones. There are numerous small mines and prospects in the area, some with reported production in the past. Talc is reported to occur in potentially economic quantities in the southern part of the mountains. Considering the potential for discovering a new gold deposit, and the reported presence of talc, the Orocopia Mountains have speculative to high mineral potential, and the lfiting of the WSA designation is a highly positive effect.

Alternative B: Reject Amendment (No Action)

Wildlife

This alternative will provide wildlife with the same level of protection provided in Alternative A. However, if the area were designated wilderness, wildlife would receive the highest level of protection possible, since the area would be closed to all vehicles and the impacts associated with mining would be substantially reduced.

Wilderness

If the area continued to be recommended as suitable under Section 202 of FLPMA, it would remain under Class L guidelines until Congressional designation, and thereafter would be protected under the terms of the Wilderness Act. In other

words, the above wilderness resource values could be adversely effected, even to the point of suitability impairment, until Congress acts. Following designation, the area would be managed in the same manner as a Section 603 wilderness area, as equal units of the National Wilderness Preservation System under the Wilderness Act of 1964.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Table 4-1 presents the cumulative impacts of the preferred altrenative.

TABLE 4-1
SUMMARY OF CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Resource	Unit of Measure	No Action	Preferred Alternative	Percent Change	New Percent Of Desert
Multiple Use Class (CDCA)					
C	Acres	1,839,640	1,655,940	-10	13.7 (17.3)*
L	Acres	6,070,050	6,253,750	+3	51.6 (48.5)*
M	Acres	3,370,560	3,370,560	0	27.8 (27.5)*
I	Acres	522,610	522,610	0	4.3 (4.1)*
Unclassified	Acres	314,000	314,000	0	2.6 (2.6)*
ACECs Added					
	Number	0	2		
	Acres	0	7,000		
Livestock Grazing					
Ephemeral Allotments	Number	16	16		
	Acres	1,619,879	1,619,879		
Ephemeral/Perennial	Number	65	65		
Allotments	Acres	2,462,131	2,462,131		
Perennial Allotments	Number	13	13		
	Acres	749,668	749,668		
Motorized Vehicle Access					
Open	Acres	523,000	523,000		
Limited	Acres	9,304,000	9,286,000		
Closed	Acres	1,978,000	1,996,000		
Point-to-Point Race Course/Corridors	Number	4	4		

* Percent of Area in Original Plan

UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

The unavoidable adverse impacts of the preferred alternative are summarized below:

AMENDMENT	Preferred Alternative Unavoidable Adverse Impact
3	- Displacement of small amount of ORV use.
5	- Little time available for: a) Coordination with Fish and Wildlife Service, and California Department of Fish and Game. b) Analysis of mineral operation. c) Development of wildlife mitigation.
8	- Restrictions on recreation and displacement of vehicle use.
10 & 11	- Grazing rights to intermingled private land useless.
13 & 14	- Lack of protection from non-discretionary actions such as locatable minerals.
13 & 14	- Adverse impacts on bighorn from new access needs.

SHORT-TERM USES AND LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

The relationship between short-term uses of the environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term resource productivity is summarized below for the preferred alternative:

Amendment	Short-Term Use	Long-Term Productivity
10	Ephemeral grazing between Alvord Road and existing allotment.	Ephemeral forage production maintained at existing levels.
13	Non-discretionary actions (such as locatable mining) and development of private inholdings.	Some localized loss of wilderness values due to non-discretionary actions.
14	Potential for mineral development, increased access (particularly in northern portion).	Some localized loss of wilderness values. Bighorn sheep herd maintained, although some conflicts would continue.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE RESOURCE COMMITMENTS

Irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources occur when a wide range of future options are foreclosed. This can result from either devoting a geographic area to a particular use (such as livestock grazing) or changing the general land use guidelines for that area (such as a multiple use class change).

"Irreversible resource uses" imply a commitment of land or renewable resources to a use for a certain period of time, during which the resources are unavailable to other uses. For the preferred alternative, these include the following:

Amendment	Irreversible Resource Uses
1, 2, 3	Motorized vehicle closures to protect sensitive resources, resulting in loss of vehicle access.
8	Limitations on recreation access to protect archaeological sites.

Amendment	Irreversible Resource Uses
10	Use of ephemeral forage between Alvord Road and existing allotment as livestock forage.
12	Elimination of Panamint Valley as a Burro Herd Management Area.

"Irretrievable resource commitments" imply a permanent loss of a resource which is not replaceable. For the preferred alternative, these include the following:

Amendment	Irretrievable Resource Uses
13, 14	Localized loss of wilderness values which are not replaceable (such as archaeological sites) due to increased mineral and access activities.

CHAPTER 5
CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Chapter V

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

NOTICES AND MEETINGS

The 1983 Amendment Process was announced at the meeting of the Desert District Advisory Council (DAC) in Pasadena, California on February 4, 1983. An invitation for proposals was sent to approximately 6,100 individuals, organizations, businesses, and governmental agencies in mid-March. It listed the criteria for evaluating amendment proposals and the final date for public input, April 30, 1983. Federal Register notices were published on February 24, 1983 (Vo. 48, No. 38) and March 9, 1983 (Vol. 48, No. 47), and a news release was issued on March 14, 1983.

Proposed amendments were reviewed by the DAC at the public meeting in Palm Springs, California on May 19, 1983. This meeting, which also served as a scoping meeting for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), was announced in the Federal Register on April 12, 1983 (Vol. 48, No. 71) and in a news release issued on May 4, 1983.

PUBLIC INPUT

Twenty-five responses were received to the invitation for amendment proposals. Organizations were unusually well represented, providing almost 30 percent of the replies, while individuals supplied only 50 percent.

All but four of the responses were from California residents - five from the area north of the Tehachapi Mountains and the remainder from Southern California. Arizona was the only other state represented.

Fourteen respondents offered twenty-six different amendment proposals. Eighteen proposals were submitted by organizations, of which eight were concerned with conservation, and eight were associated with mining. Most of the remaining amendments were proposed by individuals.

Out of the 26 proposals, four were recommended by the District Advisory Council and approved by BLM Management for consideration in the 1983 amendment process. The remainder will be handled by other Bureau administrative actions, deferred for later consideration, or dropped as inappropriate. Each amendment proposal and its fate is listed in Appendix B.

LIST OF PREPARERS

Name	Position	Office	Team Assignment
William Haigh	Planner	California Desert District	Team Leader
Irene Rice	Environmental Specialist	California Desert District	Technical Coordinator
Roberta Grannis	Typist	California Desert District	Administrative Support
Clara Stapp	Illustrator	California Desert District	Graphics
Jeffrey Aardahl	Wildlife Biologist	Ridgecrest Resource Area	Wildlife (9)
Daryl Albiston	Surface Protection Specialist	Barstow Resource Area	Botany (6, 7)
William Collins	Environmental Specialist	California Desert District	Affected Environment Charts
J. Anthony Danna	Range Conservationist	California Desert District	Livestock Grazing
Faye Davis	Wildlife Biologist	Indio Resource Area	Wildlife (13 and 14)
Pamela Elliott	Landscape Architect	Indio Resource Area	Recreation
Peter Ertman	Geology	California Desert District	Geology-Energy-Minerals (5)
David Eslinger	Outdoor Recreation Planner	California Desert District	Wilderness
Robin Kobaly	Botanist	Indio Resource Area	Botany
Ted Rado	Wildlife Biologist	Barstow Resource Area	Wildlife (1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, 11)
Judyth Reed	Archaeologist	Indio Resource Area	Cultural Resources (8)
Matthew Shumaker	Geologist	Indio Resource Area	Geology-Energy-Minerals (8, 13, 14)
Mark Sutton	Archaeologist	Barstow Resource Area	Cultural Resources (1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14)

GLOSSARY

TERMS

ALLOTMENT

An area of land where one or more operators graze their livestock. It generally consists of public lands, but may include parcels of private or state-owned lands. The number of livestock and period of use are stipulated for each allotment. An allotment may consist of several pastures or be only one pasture.

ANIMAL UNIT MONTH (AUM)

1. The amount of forage or feed required by an animal unit (i.e., one mature 1000-lb. cow or five sheep) for one month.

2. Tenure of one animal-unit for one month.

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (ACEC)

Areas within the public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards.

CALIFORNIA DESERT PLAN ELEMENT

A component of the California Desert Plan. Each element provides a more specific application of the multiple-use class guidelines for a specific resource or activity (such as wildlife or wilderness).

CLOSED AREA

No vehicle travel is allowed in these areas. It applied to all wilderness areas when established by Congress unless exempted, where provided for by management plans in ACECs, and on certain sand dunes and dry lakes.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Those fragile and nonrenewable remains of human activity, occupation, or endeavor, which are reflected in district sites, structures, buildings, objects, artifacts, ruins, works of art, architecture or natural features.

EPHEMERAL RANGE

Range consisting primarily of annual plants which vary in production annually according to fluctuation of precipitation and temperature.

EPHEMERAL/PERENNIAL RANGE

A range type intermediate between ephemeral and perennial range. Grazing is managed by first establishing a stocking rate based on the perennial forage, and then annually increasing that rate under the same procedures as for ephemeral allotments.

FLPMA

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-579, 90 Stat 2743, 43 USC 1701).

HABITAT

The natural environment of a plant or animal.

HERD MANAGEMENT AREAS

Wild horse and burro management areas. Seventeen were identified by the Desert Plan. Populations of the animals will be protected and managed within the areas through the development and implementation of Herd Management Area Plans (HMAP).

INTERIM MANAGEMENT POLICY (IMP)

The Bureau's management policy for lands under wilderness review. The policy is to continue resource use on lands under wilderness review in a manner that maintains the area's suitability for preservation as wilderness (referred to as the "non-impairment standard").

LEASEABLE MINERALS

Minerals such as coal, oil shale, oil and gas, phosphate, potash, sodium, sulphur in New Mexico and Louisiana, silica deposits in certain parts of Nevada, geothermal resources and all other minerals that may be acquired under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended.

LITHIC SCATTER

Stone debris left as a result of tool manufacture or reshaping.

LIVESTOCK OPERATOR

A person who grazes livestock on public land.

LOCATABLE MINERALS

Minerals that may be acquired under the Mining Law of 1872, as amended.

MULTIPLE-USE CLASS

Public lands in the California desert have been placed in one of four management classes (except for 300,000 "unclassified" acres). Class C includes those lands recommended as suitable for wilderness designation. Class L provides for generally lower-intensity management. Class M provides a balance between higher intensity use and protection of public lands. Class I is an intensive-use zone.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The official list, established by the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, of the nation's cultural resources worthy of preservation.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE (ORV)

Any motorized vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other terrain.

OPEN AREA

An area in which motorized vehicles may travel anywhere. It applies to those areas in Class I specifically designated "open" and to certain sand dunes and dry lakebeds.

PERENNIAL RANGE

Range with a predominance of plants having a life cycle of three or more years.

PREFERENCE

Grazing privileges established following the passage of the Taylor Grazing Act, based on the use of the Federal range during the priority period. The active preference and suspended preference together make up the total grazing preference.

PUBLIC LAND

Land administered by the Bureau of Land Management.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION

Nonmotorized and nondeveloped types of outdoor recreational activities.

ROASTING PITS

Rock-lined pits, where plants (mainly agave) were processed.

ROCKSHELTERS

Small rock overhangs or caves usually found in mountainous areas. Some contain perishables.

ROCK ART/ROCK ALIGNMENTS

Rock art, including pictographs and petroglyphs, stone circles and rock walls.

SALEABLE MINERALS

Minerals such as common varieties of sand, stone, gravel, cinders, pumice, pumicite and clay that may be acquired under the Materials Act of 1947, as amended.

UNUSUAL PLANT ASSEMBLAGES (UPA)

Stand of vegetation within the CDCA which can be recognized as extraordinary for one or more factors. Factors can include unusual age, size, high cover or density, or disjunct from main centers of distribution.

WILDERNESS AREA

1. An area formally designated by Congress as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

2. An area formally designated as part of the State of California's Wilderness Preservation System.

WILDERNESS NON-SUITABILITY

A management recommendation, based on the application of wilderness suitability criteria, that the best use of resources comprising a Wilderness Study Area would be met without designation of the WSA as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System, permitting uses which might not necessarily be compatible with wilderness values.

WILDERNESS REPORTING

The process of preparing the report on each wilderness study area and submitting that report to the President and Congress through the Department of the Interior.

WILDERNESS SUITABILITY

A management recommendation, based on the application of wilderness suitability criteria, that the best use of the resources comprising a Wilderness Study Area would be designation of the WSA as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

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Weaver, R.A. and J.L. Mensch
1971 Bighorn sheep in northwestern San Bernardino and southwestern Inyo Counties Calif. Dept. of Fish and Game Wildlife Administrative Report No. 70-2.

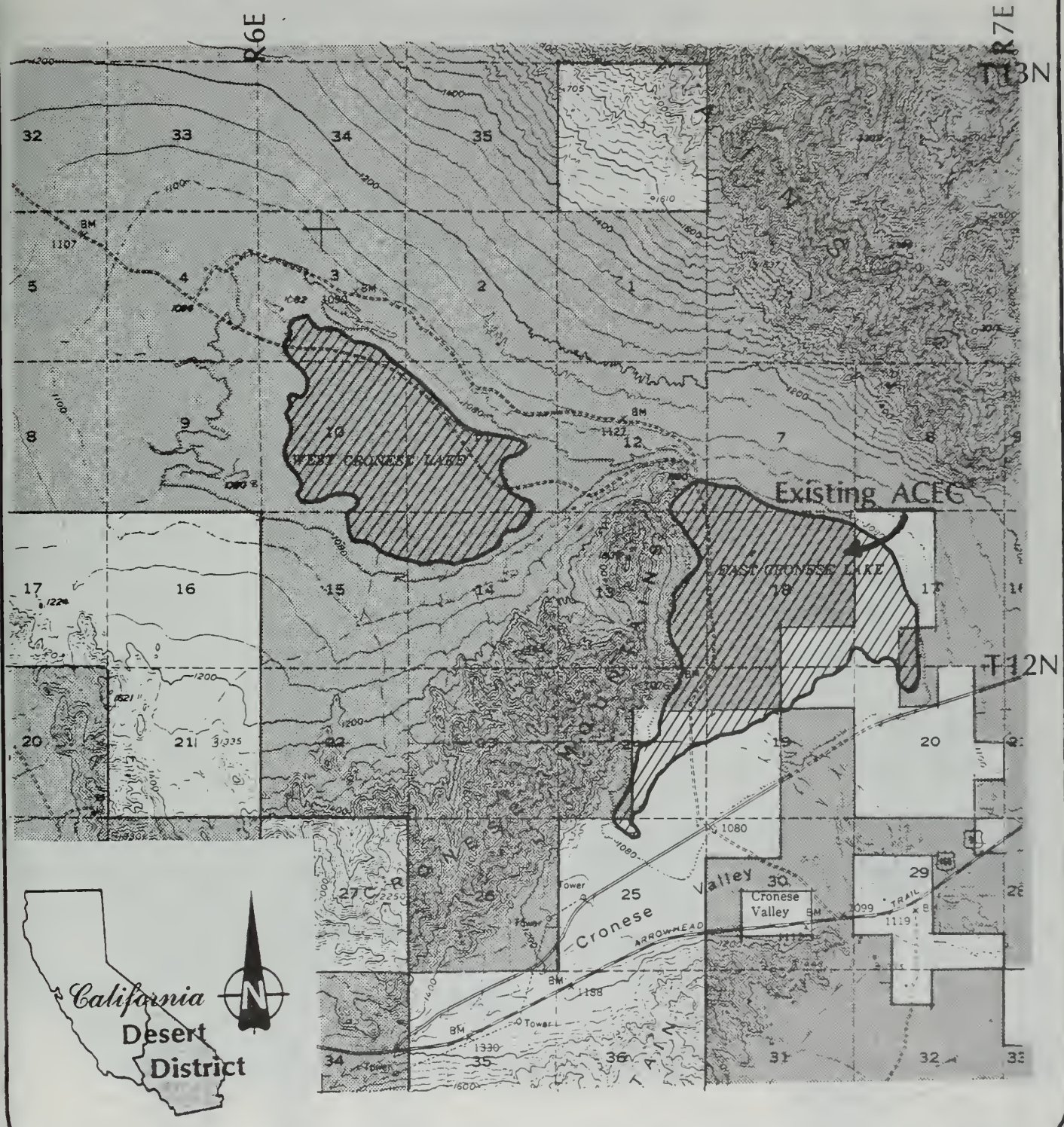
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

MAPS OF AMENDMENTS

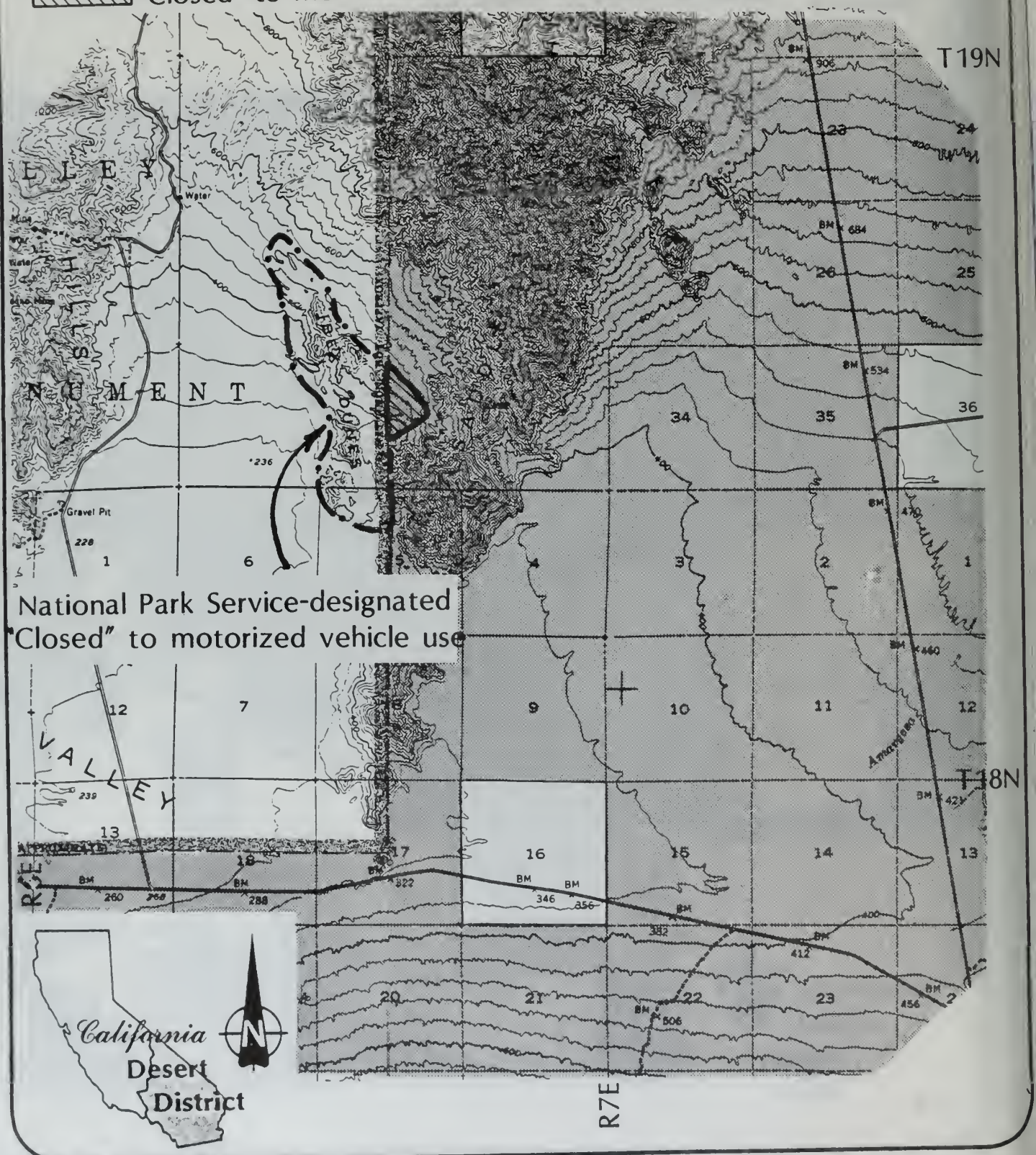
Amendment 1
Cronese Lake

Proposed addition to "Significant List"
Designate as
"Closed" to motorized vehicle use

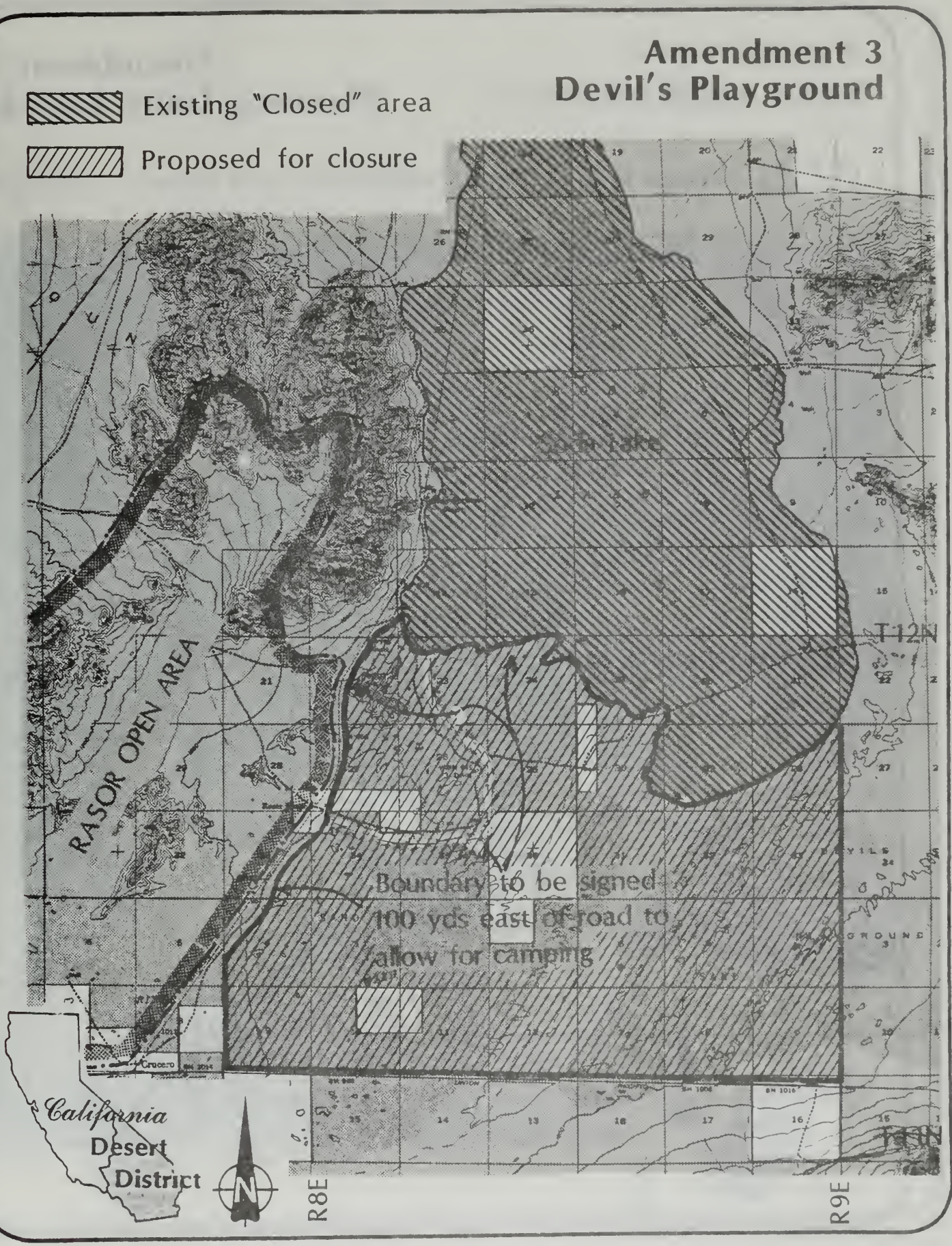


Amendment 2
Ibex Dunes

Proposed addition to "Significant List"
Designate as
"Closed" to motorized vehicle use

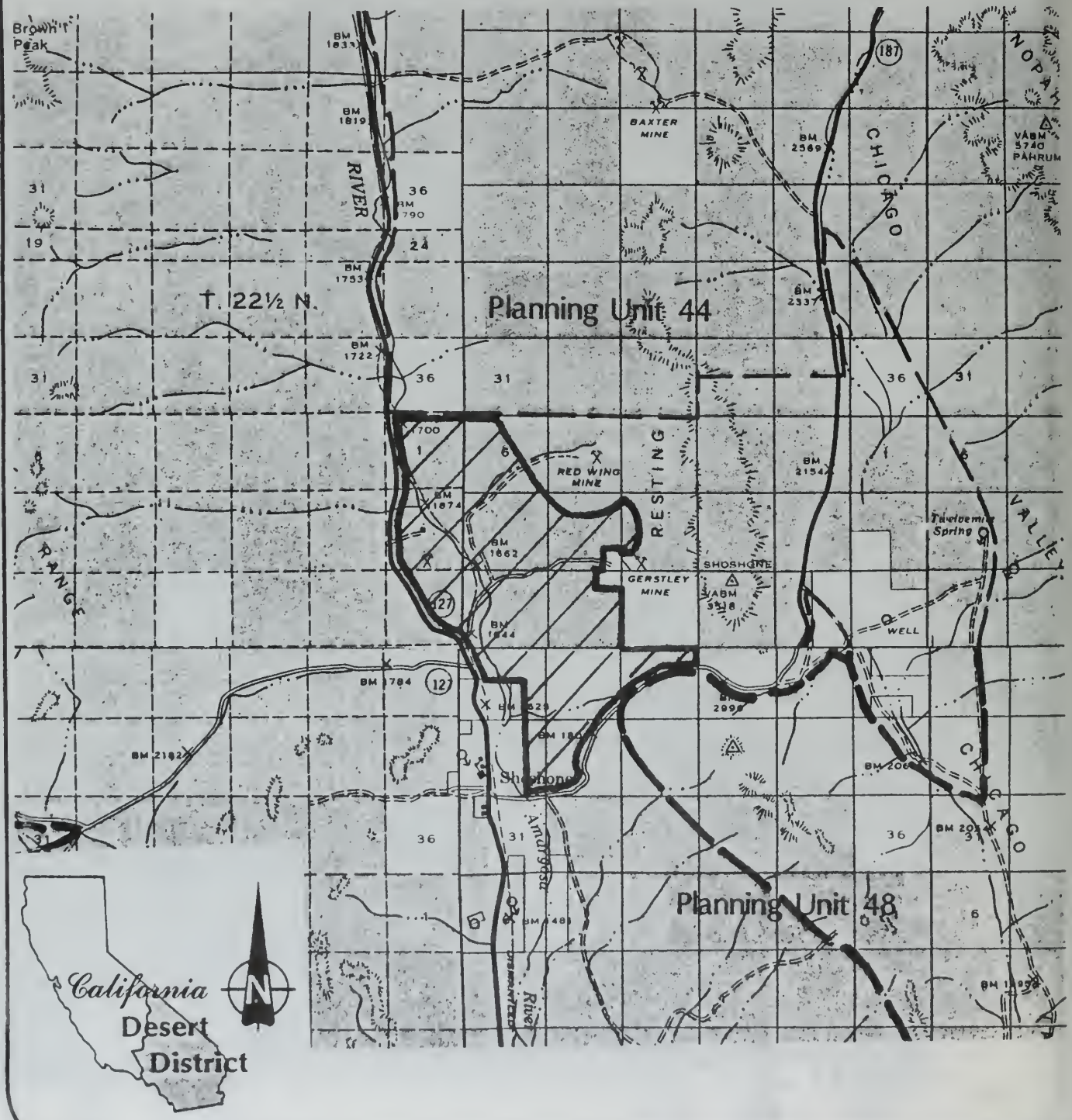


Amendment 3
Devil's Playground



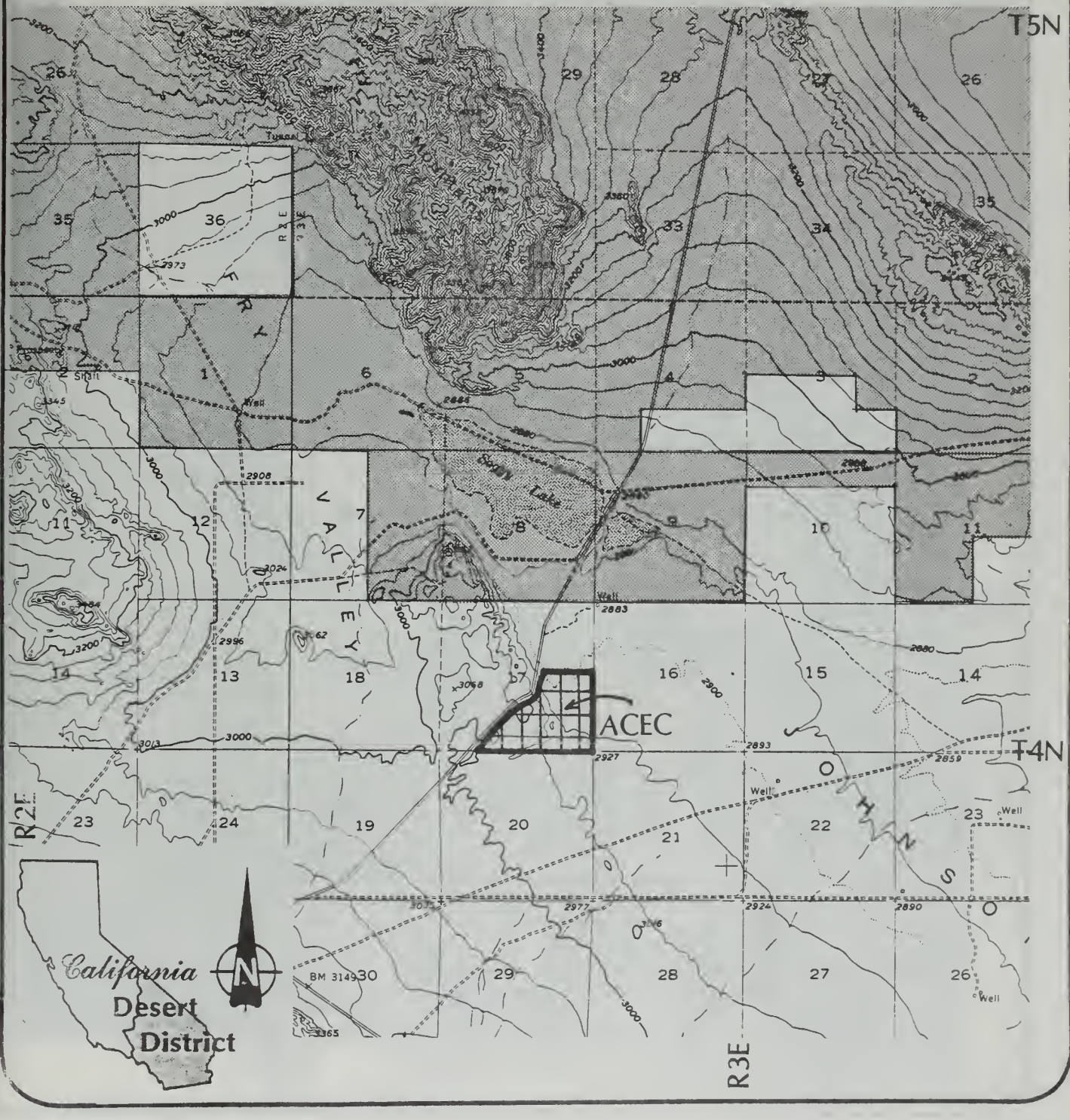
Amendment 5
Planning Units 44e/48e

Change from "M" to "L"



Amendment 6
Creosote Rings ACEC

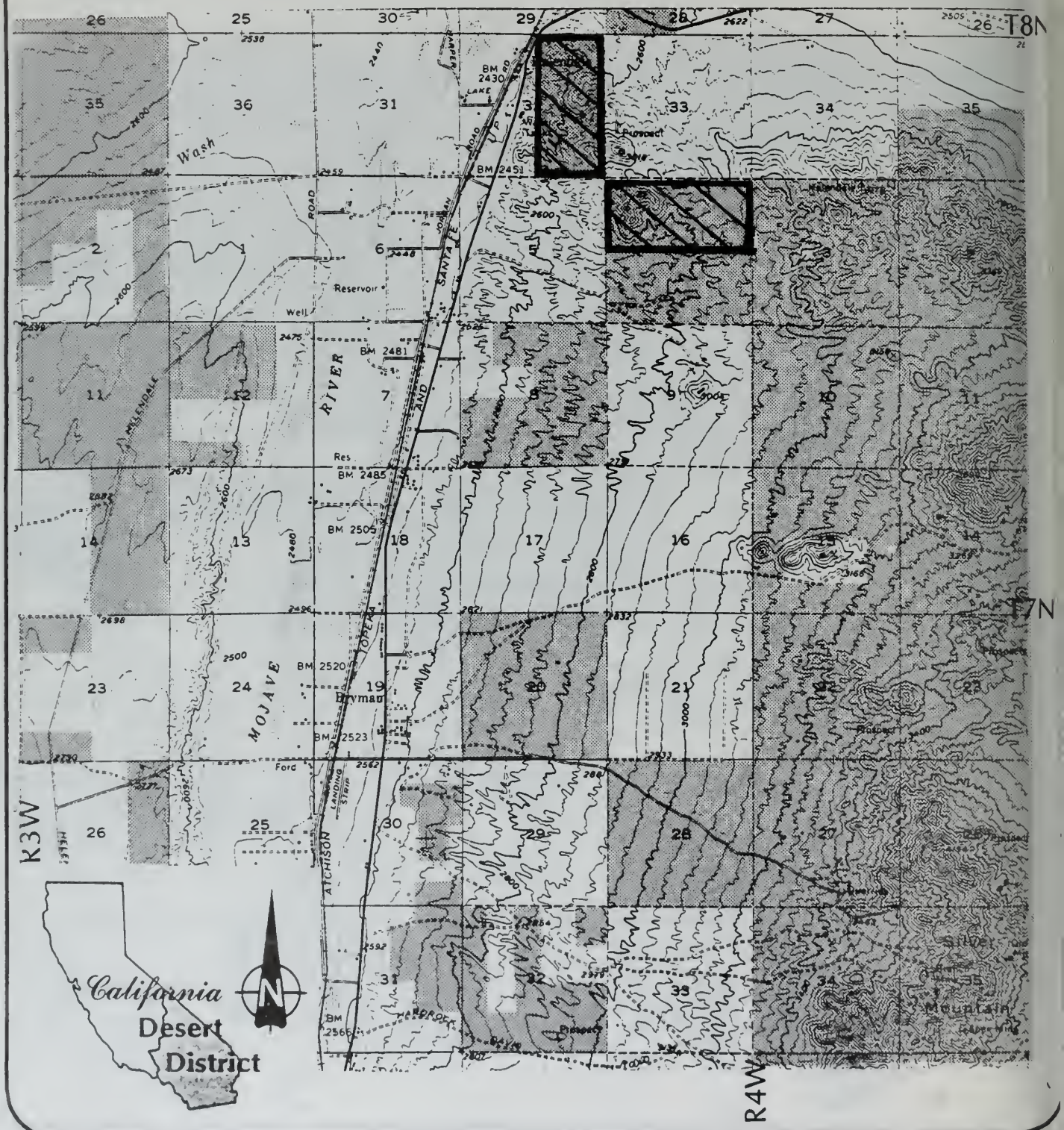
Change from "Unclassified" to "L"

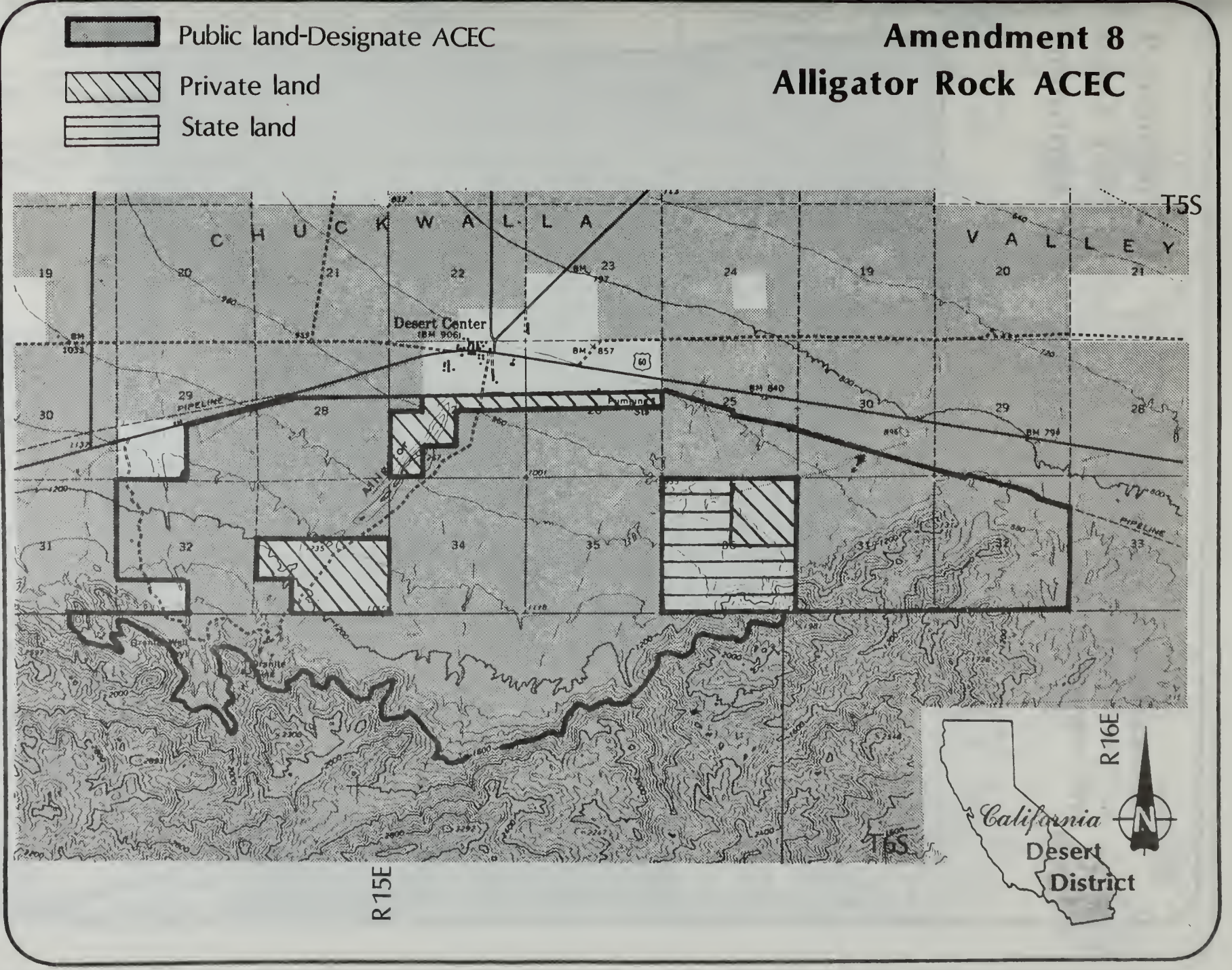


Amendment 7
Sclerocactus ACEC

Alt.A
Designate ACEC

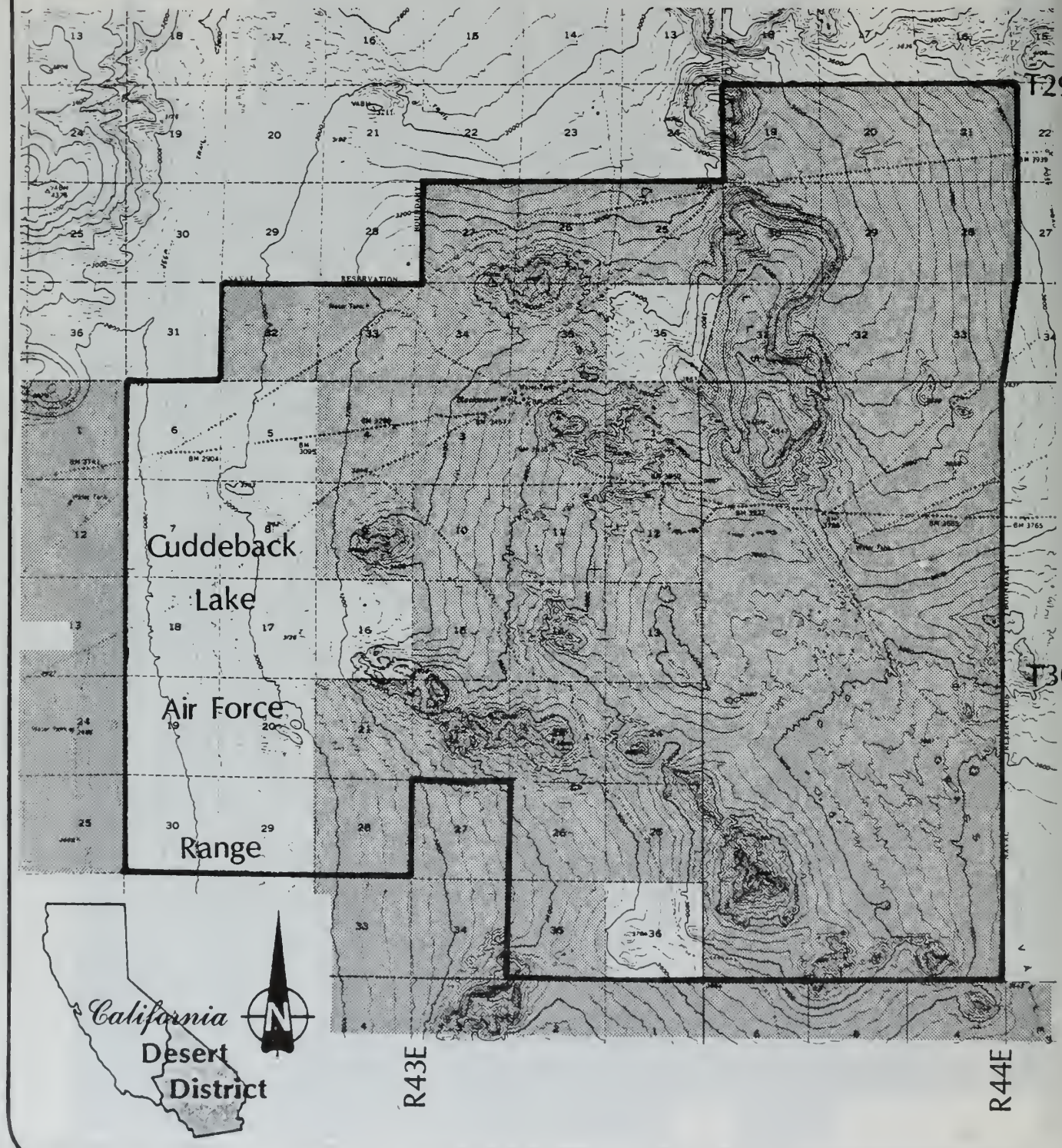
Alt.B
Change from "Unclassified" to "M"

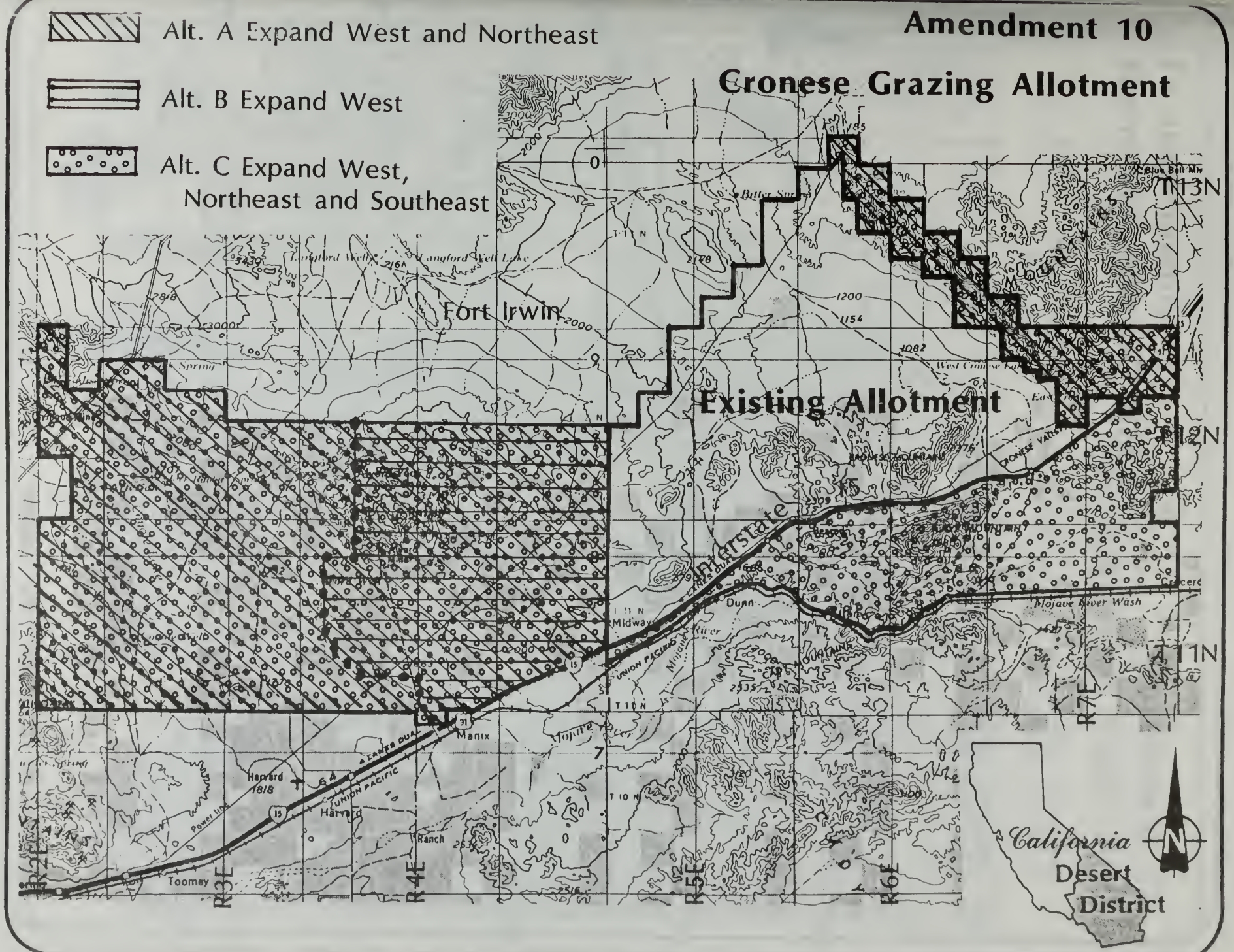



Public land-Designate ACEC
Private land
State land
Amendment 8
Alligator Rock ACEC
C H U C K W A L L A
V A L L E Y
Desert Center
T5S
T6S
R15E
R16E
California
Desert
District
N

Modification from "Ephemeral"
to "Ephemeral/Perennial"
with year-round usage

Amendment 9
Pilot Knob
Grazing Allotment

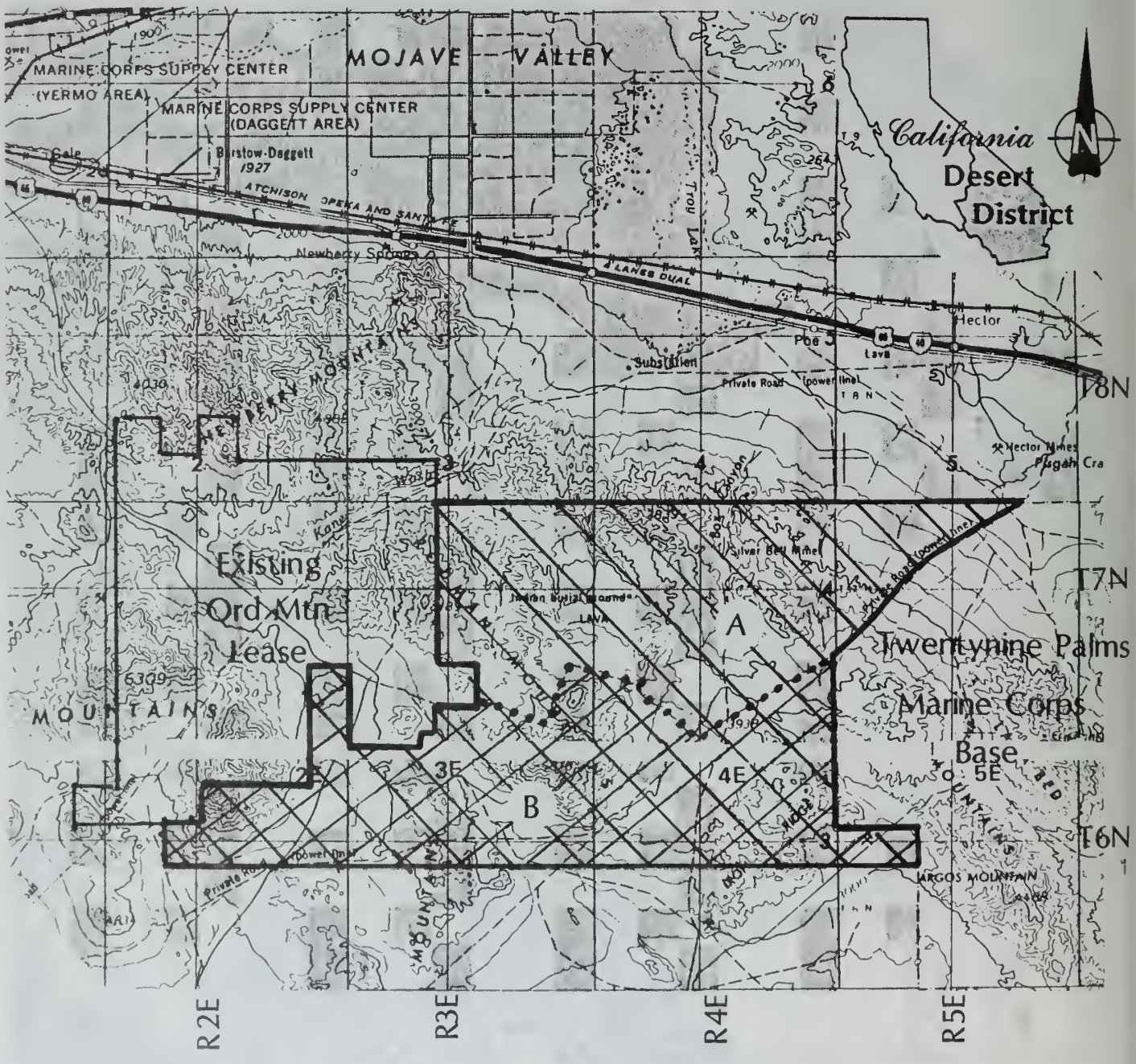



Alt. A Expand West and Northeast
Alt. B Expand West
Alt. C Expand West, Northeast and Southeast
Amendment 10
Cronese Grazing Allotment
Existing Allotment
Fort Irwin
T13N
T12N
T11N
R3E
R4E
R5E
R6E
Interstate
Mojave River Wash
Manix
Harvard
Toomey
Ranch
Dunn
Midway
California Desert District
N

Amendment 11
Ord Mtn Grazing Allotment

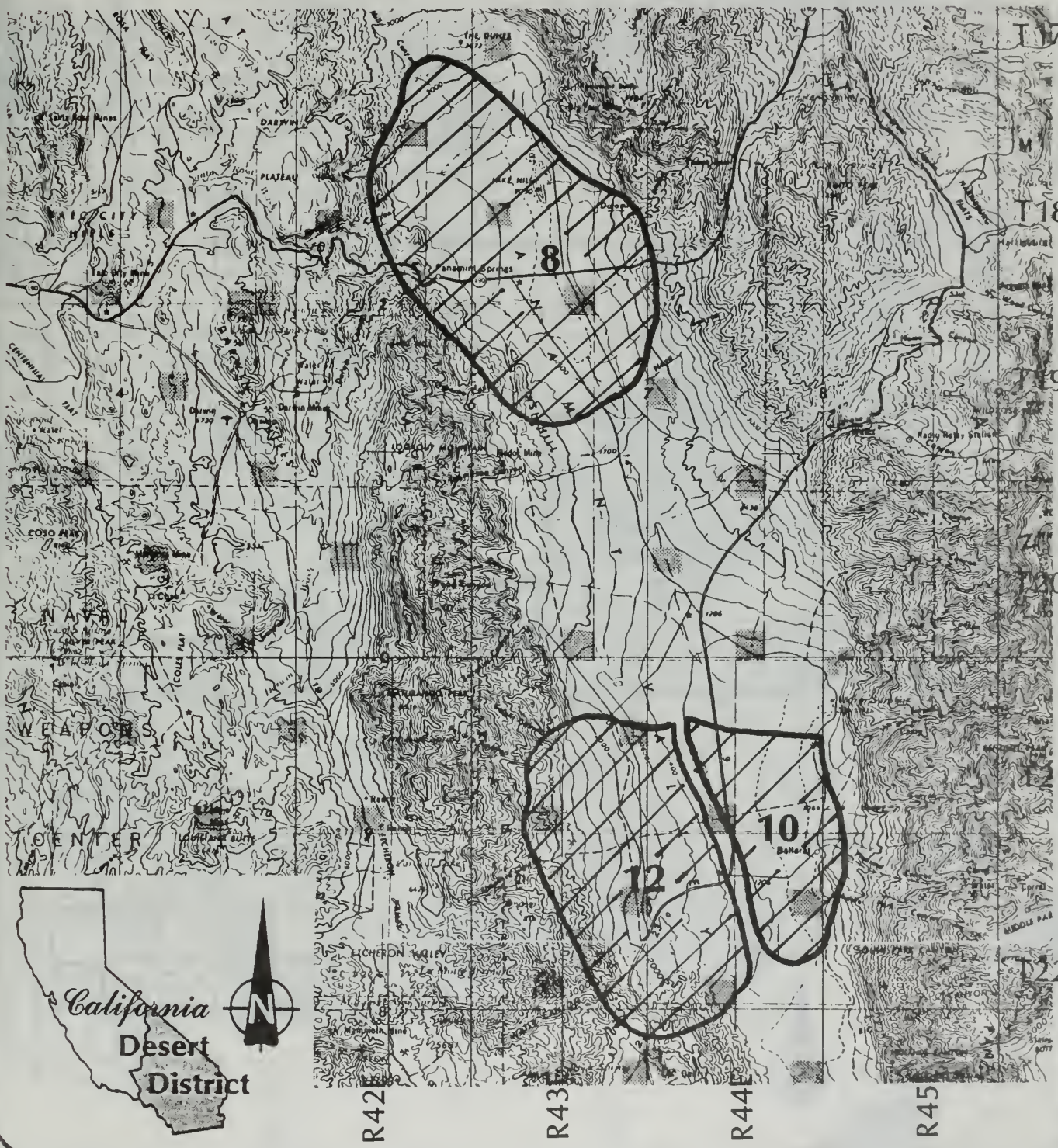
Alt.A
Expansion (East)

Alt.B
Modified expansion (East)



Amendment 12
Panamint Herd Mgmt. Area

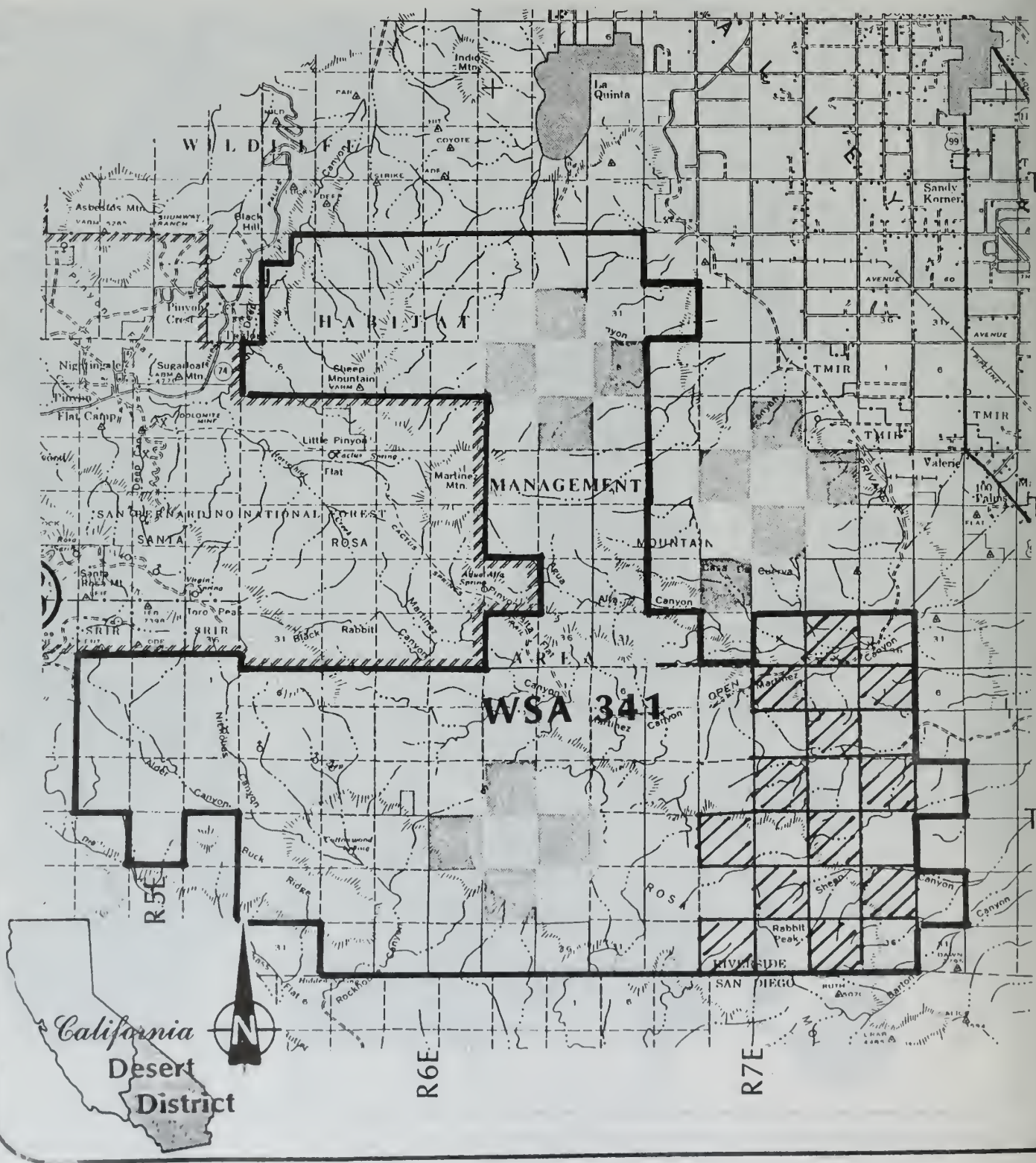
Delete Herd Mgmt. areas-
8,10, and 12



Amendment 13
WSA 341
Santa Rosa Mtns

- Alt.A
  Change WSA from "C" to "L"
- Alt.B
  Change WSA fom "C" to "L"
  and designate as ACEC

Split Estate land

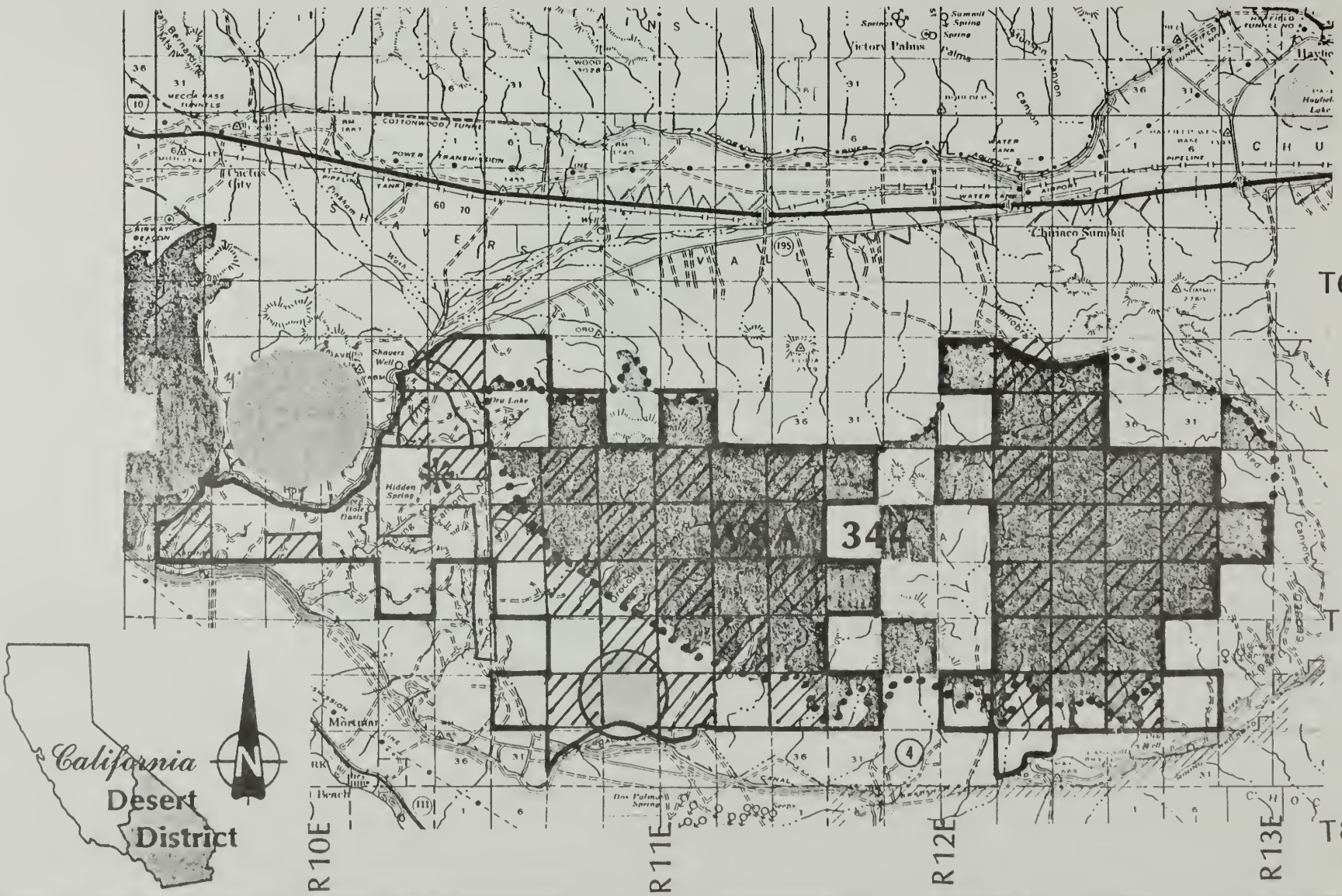


Change WSA from "C" to "L"

Area presently recommended "suitable" (Class "C")

Split Estate land

Amendment 14
WSA 344
Orocopia Mtns



APPENDIX B

AMENDMENTS NOT CONSIDERED

TABLE B-1

Amendments Not Accepted For Consideration in 1983

Prelim. Amend. No.	Amendment	Proponent's Reason for Submission	Remarks
	AMENDMENTS DEFERRED		
83-P-22	AMENDMENT: Delete Designation of the East Mojave National Scenic Area (EMNSA). (Calif. Mining Assn., Ronald L. Parratt).	RATIONALE: This amendment was placed on "hold" in 1982, but BLM acted on amendments regarding EMNSA boundaries, apparently contradicting this position. Therefore, CMA resubmits this amendment because the EMNSA was not presented in the draft or proposed plans and was, thus, not addressed in the EIS or subjected to public comment.	Defer until settlement of the legal case.
83-P-23	AMENDMENT: Delete Areas of Critical Environmental Concern Numbers 2, 74, 75. (Calif. Mining Ass., Ronald L. Parratt).	RATIONALE: Although this amendment is on "hold" until the lawsuit is settled, CMA still feels the proposal is appropriate, since the 3 ACECs were not identified in the Proposed Plan and were not subject to public participation as required by BLM procedures.	Defer until settlement of the legal case.
83-P-24	AMENDMENT: Reinstate and approve Preliminary Amendment No. 82-P-27b. This preliminary amend is under "deferred" status. (ASARCO, Inc., George Stahis).	RATIONALE: The CDCA can be effectively managed by the multiple use concept as reiterated in Section 601 of FLPMA without the need of a designated EMNSA "Special Area" within the CDCA.	Preliminary Amendment #82-P-27b is the proposal considered as Amendment 18 in the 1982 Amendments. The proposal to delete designation of the EMNSA was offered by the California Mining Assoc. and by the San Bernardino Dept., in 1981; it was deferred until settlement of the legal case.
	AMENDMENTS HANDLED THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION		
83-P-9	AMENDMENT: Regulate the amount and type of vehicular traffic using the Mojave Trail by the use of a permit system. (Ecology Center of Southern California, Nancy Pearlman).	RATIONALE: This road is of such great historic interest that it may become overutilized. It may need management such as that given, for example, to the John Muir Trail and the Grand Canyon (boat trips). Excessive use by ORVs could impair the experiences of those who wish to hike parts of the trail, in order to appreciate historic values.	No amendment is needed. Proponents should provide input to the route designation process.

TABLE B-1

Amendments Not Accepted For Consideration in 1983

Prelim. Amend. No.	Amendment	Proponent's Reason for Submission	Remarks
	AMENDMENTS DEFERRED		
83-P-22	AMENDMENT: Delete Designation of the East Mojave National Scenic Area (EMNSA). (Calif. Mining Assn., Ronald L. Parratt).	RATIONALE: This amendment was placed on "hold" in 1982, but BLM acted on amendments regarding EMNSA boundaries, apparently contradicting this position. Therefore, CMA resubmits this amendment because the EMNSA was not presented in the draft or proposed plans and was, thus, not addressed in the EIS or subjected to public comment.	Defer until settlement of the legal case.
83-P-23	AMENDMENT: Delete Areas of Critical Environmental Concern Numbers 2, 74, 75. (Calif. Mining Ass., Ronald L. Parratt).	RATIONALE: Although this amendment is on "hold" until the lawsuit is settled, CMA still feels the proposal is appropriate, since the 3 ACECs were not identified in the Proposed Plan and were not subject to public participation as required by BLM procedures.	Defer until settlement of the legal case.
83-P-24	AMENDMENT: Reinstate and approve Preliminary Amendment No. 82-P-27b. This preliminary amend is under "deferred" status. (ASARCO, Inc., George Stahis).	RATIONALE: The CDCA can be effectively managed by the multiple use concept as reiterated in Section 601 of FLPMA without the need of a designated EMNSA "Special Area" within the CDCA.	Preliminary Amendment #82-P-27b is the proposal considered as Amendment 18 in the 1982 Amendments. The proposal to delete designation of the EMNSA was offered by the California Mining Assoc. and by the San Bernardino Dept., in 1981; it was deferred until settlement of the legal case.
	AMENDMENTS HANDLED THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION		
83-P-9	AMENDMENT: Regulate the amount and type of vehicular traffic using the Mojave Trail by the use of a per-	RATIONALE: This road is of such great historic interest that it may become overutilized. It may need management ORVs could impair the experiences of those who wish to hike parts of the trail, in order to appreciate historic values.	No amendment is needed. Proponents should provide

TABLE B-1

Amendments Not Accepted For Consideration in 1983

Prelim. Amend. No.	Amendment	Proponent's Reason for Submission	Remarks
	AMENDMENTS DROPPED Desert-Wide Amendments		
83-P-1	AMENDMENT: The Desert Advisory Committee selection process should be amended to require that a certified planner and/or licensed landscape architect sit on the board at all times. At least one day of public hearings per site should be conducted on a weekend day or weekday evening. (Gregg Yamachika, Gardena, CA).	RATIONALE: The Advisory Committee should be apolitical to best balance public interests. Since council members cannot be selected democratically, a professional planner may be best trained to resolve inequities among desert use issues. Weekday hearings are inaccessible to the working public.	It is not possible to include representatives of all interest groups or experts in all resource fields on a 15-member council. Expertise in planning and landscape architecture is available on the BLM staff. Public hearings are held on weekends as well as weekdays and evening for the convenience of interested citizens.
83-P-2	AMENDMENT: Amend the CDCA "Visual Resources Management Program" to include a visual impact analysis supplement to environmental impact statements, when the Bureau is required by NEPA to prepare an EIS. Conduct and publish a visual impact analysis for any change in land use classification or use which may adversely impact the visual resources within the East Mojave National Scenic Area. (Ecology Center of Southern California, Nancy Pearlman).	RATIONALE: The present "contrast rating process" and Visual Resource Management program do not provide public information on the most noticeable of potential impacts. There is no discussion of means employed to mitigate adverse visual impacts as outlined in the East Mojave Scenic Area Management Philosophy.	This is a NEPA compliance issue, not a matter within the scope of the Desert Plan.
83-P-3	AMENDMENT: Multiple use guidelines for BLM planning units must be consistent with county zoning (Cali. - Mining Assn., Ronald L. Parratt)	RATIONALE; Guidelines controlling activities within BLM planning units should be consistent with existing county zoning designations.	Coordination with local land use planning agencies is already required by the Desert Plan (see Page 135).

TABLE B-1

Amendments Not Accepted For Consideration in 1983

Prelim. Amend. No.	Amendment	Proponent's Reason for Submission	Remarks
83-P-4	AMENDMENT: Show in the CDCA Plan the buffer zones that must exist adjacent to roads bounding wilderness study areas. (Calif. Mining Assn., Ronald L Parratt).	RATIONALE: Numerous WSAs are defined by roads with no apparent buffer zone. Wilderness up to and adjoining a road appears incompatible. The implied buffer zone should be shown on WSA maps.	This is a wilderness planning issue and is outside the scope of the plan amendment process.
	Vehicle Access		
83-P-8	AMENDMENT: The area known as the Cadiz Dunes, Planning Unit 81, should be changed from "closed" to "open" in the Motorized Vehicle Element of the Desert Plan. (Assoc. Blazers of CA, Leonard Parrish).	RATIONALE: The present designation was an oversight in the plan. There is no reference to any rare, endangered, or sensitive flora or fauna in the area. Opening the dunes would create a positive economic impact on Amboy and Chambliss.	The dunes were designated closed because of sensitive wildlife and scenic resources and outstanding opportunities for non-vehicular recreation. The nearby Rice Dunes are open.
83-P-10	AMENDMENT: Off-road vehicle oopen areas should have to be Congressionally designated in the CDCA. (Mark Sommers, Apple Valley).	RATIONALE: Since it takes Congressional action to protect an area, e.g., wilderness designation, it should also take Congressional action to destroy an area.	Such a requirement is outside the scope of the planning process. The Federal Land Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) provides for off-road vehicle activity, where appropriate (Section 610(a)(4)).
83-P-12	AMENDMENT: Reclassify the entire Panamint Mountain range. Some areas should be classes M or I. (Margaretha Krucker, Los Angeles).	RATIONALE: During the period of inventory for the CDCA Plan, the Panamint Mountains were not evaluated according to the actual facts; many subjects were misrepresented, omitted or erroneous. A reclassification would help mining exploration and extraction and further activate mining without unnecessary degradation of the environment.	The Plan recognizes the presence of mineral wealth in the Panamints. Numerous sensitive resources are also present. Class L managment provides protection while permitting mineral explortion and development. Mining has been proceeding rapidly in this region since Plan adoption in 1980.

TABLE B-1

Amendments Not Accepted For Consideration in 1983

Prelim. Amend. No.	Amendment	Proponent's Reason for Submission	Remarks
	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern		
83-P-18	AMENDMENT: Establish an ACEC at Soda Lake, the most significant playa in the CDCA. Include the whole lake up to the shoreline. (Citizens for Mojave National Park, Peter Burk).	RATIONALE: The Lake is threatened by the Soda Lake gold mine. Whereas an ACEC would permit legitimate mining, ACEC status would protect archaeological, cultural, historical, wildlife and pleistocene values of the lake. A mangement plan is needed to protect these resources.	No new data. The lake is adequately protected under Class L management.
83-P-19	AMENDMENT: Establish a Cima Dome Joshua Tree ACEC. This is the world's largest and densest J.T. forest and is a unique ecosystem. (Citizens for Mojave National Park, Peter Burk).	RATIONALE: The Cima Dome Joshua Tree Forest receives no special management and, thus, is vulnerable. This marvelous area of nature study, prime wildflowers, hiking, photography, geology, vulcanism, and unique scientific qualities must not be lost.	No new data. This area is already designated a National Natural Landmark and is inside the East Mojave National Scenic Area. In addition, it is designated Class L and receives sufficient protection at this time.
	Wilderness		
83-P-25	AMENDMENT: Change WSA 265 (New York Mtns.) from non-suitable to suitable for wilderness. (Sierra Club, J. Dodson).	RATIONALE: The N.Y. Mtns. contain one of the best botanical collections in the CDCA--over 288 species (Thorne). A white fir forest lies near the top. Wildlife include bighorn sheep, mule deer, porcupine, mountain lion and many others. Over 60 species of birds, including golden eagle and prairie falcon, nest there. Non-recognition of this area as wilderness adversely affects the Desert Plan by not giving sufficient weight to the above-named values.	This amendment was dropped from consideration in 1982 due to failure to meet "new data" criteria and to the unliklihood of a change in suitability recommendation due to the area's high mineralization.

TABLE B-1

Amendments Not Accepted For Consideration in 1983

Prelim. Amend. No.	Amendment	Proponent's Reason for Submission	Remarks
83-P-26	AMENDMENT: Change WSA 270 (Table Mtn.) from non-suitable to suitable. (Sierra Club, J. Dodson).	RATIONALE: The CDCA Plan offers no special designation for this de facto wilderness; in fact, it doesn't even mention it. Table Mountain is one of only two true mesas in CA. The mesa is pristine and is a juniper woodland.	No new data was presented. The principal reason for recommending this area non-suitable for wilderness designation was high mineral values. There is insufficient reason to change the recommendation.
83-P-27	AMENDMENT: Change WSA 227 (Clark Mountain) from non-suitable to suitable. (Sierra Club, J. Dodson).	RATIONALE: This is a marvelous wilderness. The record book on the peak shows many adventurers seeking this wilderness experience. The biota on this mountain are fascinating: white fir, ceanothus, ak, yerba santa, etc. The Desert Plan loses credibility by not recognizing this area as wilderness.	This area's designation as an ACEC provides a means of protecting the resources listed by applicant. High mineralization accounts for the non-suitable recommendation.
83-P-28	AMENDMENT: Change all of WSA #206 (Newberry Mtns) from "C" to "L". (Calif. Mining. Assn., Ronald L. Parratt).	RATIONALE: WSA #206 contains a substantial amount of private land and is clearly unmanageable as wilderness.	No new data has been presented.
83-P-29	AMENDMENT: Change all of WSA #310 (Chemehuevi) from Class C to Class L. (Calif. Mining Assn., Ronald L. Parratt).	RATIONALE: WSA #310 contais a substantial amount of private land and is clearly unmanageable as wilderness.	No new data has been presented.
83-P-30	AMENDMENT: Change all of WSA #207 (Rodman Mtns) from Class C to Class L. (Calif. Mining Assn., Ronald L. Parratt).	RATIONALE: WSA #207 contains a substantial amount of private land and is clearly unmanageable as wilderness.	No new data has been presented.
83-P-31	AMENDMENT: At least 90 days prior to any recommendation to include an area into the wilderness system BLM must notify by registered mail all holders of any interest in that particular WSA of their pending recommendation. (California Mining Association).	RATIONALE: Many holders of interest in WSAs such as mining claim owners, federal lease holders, holders of rights-of-way, private land owners, etc., are not aware of activities affecting their interest. Many live out of state where knowledge of such ownership is available to BLM, it appears appropriate for BLM to notify such interested paties.	A plan amendment is not necessary. The BLM will continue to publicize widely all developments in the wilderness process.

TABLE B-1

Amendments Not Accepted For Consideration in 1983

Prelim. Amend. No.	Amendment	Proponent's Reason for Submission	Remarks
83-P-43	AMENDMENT: Change certain WSA boundaries to eliminate areas which may be needed for roadbuilding materials. (CALTRANS, San Bernardino).	RATIONALE: The State (CALTRANS) needs readily available sources of gravel for road maintenance throughout the desert. Some high quality areas are within boundaries of WSAs which might become suitable for wilderness duirng trade-offs at the time of passage by Congress.	Any boundary changes in WSAs are part of the wilderness review process and outside the scope of the plan amendment process.
	Grazing		
83-P-32	AMENDMENT: Annex the historic Turtle Mountain grazing lease (#04067333) as an addition to the Chemehuevi Valley grazing lease (#9018). (BLM, Needles RA, for Frank Smith).	RATIONALE: Additional water sources are needed by the applicant to sustain an economical management unit. This lease was not addressed during the desert planning process.	Proposal does not meet criteria. No new data.
	Wild Horse and Burros		
83-P-38	AMENDMENT: Reduce the carrying capacity for burros on the Kessler Springs grazing allotment from 462 AUMs to none. (BLM, Needles RA, for Cary Overson).	RATIONALE: Burro populations are expanding and moving. They utilize forage which should be allocated to livestock. The forage is paid for by the grazing lessee.	Proposal does not meet criteria. No new data.

Sources of Amendments Accepted for Consideration in 1983

Final Amend. No.	Prelim. Amend. No.	Title	Proponent
1	83-P-5a	Close Cronese Lakes	BLM
2	83-P-5b	Close Ibex Dunes	BLM
3	83-P-7	Close portion of Devil's Playground	BLM
4	83-P-11 83-P-13	Land Sales - Guidelines	BLM
5	83-P-14	Planning Units 44e/48e - Change M to L	BLM
6	83-P-16	Creosote Rings ACEC	BLM
7	83-P-17	Sclerocactus ACEC	Ronald May, Seabrook, TX
8	83-P-20	Alligator Rock ACEC	BLM
9	83-P-33	Pilot Knob Allotment - Change Classification	Joe Mendiburu, Oildale, CA
10	83-P-35	Cronese Lake Allotment expansion	Scott and Claudia Blair, Santa Ana, CA
11	83-P-36	Ord Mountain Allotment expansion	Dave Fisher, Hinkley, CA
12	83-P-37	Panamint Herd Management Area	BLM
13	83-P-39	Santa Rosa Mountains	BLM
14	83-P-40	Orocopia Mountains	BLM

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